THE SPACE GAMER

FOR CREATIVE ADVENTURES

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in this issue

OneWorld

Humanizing Rivets

G. E. V. Tactics

THE SPACE GAMER

January-February, No. 26, 1980

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IMPORTANT

Metagaming will no longer give away games or other premiums for subscriptions to THE SPACE GAMER. All such offers are rescended henceforth.

Discounts on Metagaming products for THE SPACE GAMER subscribers will no longer be offered or honored by Metagaming.

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Where We're Going

IMPORTANT IN THE LABYRINTH

The catalog in this issue carries a description of TFT: ITL as a boxed, $19.95 fantasy role-playing game system. (THIS PRODUCT WILL *NOT* BE INTRODUCED IN THIS FORM AT THIS TIME.) We decided that boxed ITL was the wrong package at the wrong price at the wrong time.

TFT: ITL is better than Dungeons & Dragons or any competing system. However, at $19.95, our great fear was that too few would try it. You have to play TFT to realize its superiority. For this reason, we've reformatted the initial Game Master's package as a $4.95 rules booklet.

The rules you get for $4.95 will be the same rules that were going into the $19.95 package. What has been deleted are the counters, box, and other play-aids. The other material will come out in a supplementary package later.

TFT: ITL will be the Game Master's module with the hero talents section. You will need the TFT: MELEE rules for combat and TFT: WIZARD rules for magic.

TFT:ADVANCED COMBAT and TFT: ADVANCED MAGIC modules will also be introduced in booklet form. If you want the enhanced combat and magic system fully compatible with MELEE and WIZARD, the Advanced modules will fit the bill. Each module is three to four times as long as the basic MELEE and WIZARD rules.

INTO 1980

The new year starts with more projects underway than ever. Those interested in game designing for Metagaming should note the form and comments elsewhere in this issue. The number of non-house designers being published is rising. They will account for more than half of the titles in 1980. Your chances of getting in print at Metagaming are good, if you're willing to take the care with a design it deserves.

The next three micros will be out by February. ROMMEL'S PANZERS is a tactical tank level game using typical North African terrain. ARTIFACT is a game of Lunar combat between aliens and early human bases. Scenarios include Rovers and equipment not originally intended for combat. Also included is the Dingus, the strange artifact of the aliens which causes the fracas. Even the Russians want it. Scenarios later in time reflect the development of specific Lunar tactical forces for bloodier battles. The third item is a MicroQuest, DEATH TEST 2. This is a sequel to DEATH TEST in which Thorz is upset about all the whimps getting through his mercenary screening process. It's a guaranteed tougher test for THE FANTASY TRIP characters.

After ARTIFACT, ROMMEL'S PANZERS and DEATH TEST 2 there is no set schedule. There are seventeen active projects. In the historical micro area there is a Viking game, Civil War riverine combat system, Indian trade game, medieval siege game, ramming Gulleys game, WWII east front tactical game and a game system covering Napoleonic, Civil War and World War I battles. In the science fiction area is an Ogre game about the powered infantry units, the first micro in a space role-playing system, a city revolt game and several others in various stages of development. In the fantasy area are four THE FANTASY TRIP MicroQuests and an underground tactical fantasy system, plus a number of less developed TFT projects.

Looking over the list of MicroGames underway I see that a few were skipped because they are in the nature of special projects. It would seem hard for us to publish less than twelve new micro titles in 1980. Also, look for the introduction of full die-cut counters and other improvements later in the year. We feel our under $5.00 line is qualitatively better than any of the new spate of imitators. They deserve to be done in better style and packaging. If you are better, it doesn't hurt to look better. There will be other changes in this area to solidly sustain the MicroGame superiority.

Aside from Micros a project to do inexpensive boxed games is well underway. Two of the designs for this series are almost completed. These games will not be very much longer in rules than micros but will mostly be multi-player games that require components that can't fit the micro constraints. They are good games that deserve the larger treatment. The first in this series will probably be an historical covering Europe for all of World War II. It is a multi-player game which can be played to completion in 3-4 hours. It is our first "monster" game -- just shorter and playable. Another will be a sequel to INVASION OF THE AIR EATERS. Those of you who missed this gem for some reason might want to go back and get it. The sequel covers the inner solar system and the second wave of the alien invasion with orbiting planets and a separate map of each contested body. This game will deliver the fun and play value that a viewing of the components of SPI's Battle Fleet Mars seemed to promise.

Also in the new boxed series will be WARPLORDS, the multi-player sequel to WARPWAR. There are also scheduled a module of the space role-playing system and two multi-player, society level games in the Napoleonic/Civil War series.

The next section of WHERE WE'RE GOING may surprise some readers. It is very logical from our view point. Every organization must decide what it is best at doing and not fool around in distractions. We are best at games. That is what we like and want to do and, not surprisingly, do best.

CHANGING THE GUARD

Next issue of THE SPACE GAMER will be under different control. There will be a new publisher and editor - Steve Jackson, of OGRE and THE FANTASY TRIP fame. If you picked up rumors about THE SPACE GAMER being up for sale or such, this is what it's about.

Concurrent with the change Patron Subscribers will receive their full refund, as promised. The new managament will honor all other subscriptions and will probably be making some changes in the type of offers made. All issues you've subscribed for will continue if you're a regular subscriber.

Steve has been working hard on the change over, especially in the area of improving the content and interest of TSG. As a publication of Metagaming's TSG was subject to necessary limits and policies reflecting our higher priority for games. Steve will be running TSG as a venture unto itself with all the freedoms and opportunities that implies.

I personally feel TSG readers will be getting more of what they like with Steve at the helm. New energy and vision will make a difference. Metagaming's effort with TSG had become, admittedly, less than unflagging enthusiasm. Our best interest and effort is games, which will now have our full attention.

THE SPACE GAMER will probably retain a semi-Metagaming flavor for the next few issues. I'll be writing a Metagaming news column and we'll be buying a number of ads each issue. Aside from that everything else should get more and varied coverage. After twenty six issues, starting in May 1975, we won't say goodbye, but, see ya around. It's time to let others chart new courses to improvement. Steve has all the knowledge, drive and finances required to coax TSG to new highs. We all wish him the best.

Howard Thompson

Where We're Going

by Steve Jackson

As of next issue, *The Space Gamer* won't be part of Metagaming. It'll be an independent magazine, published and edited by me — Steve Jackson. So what does that mean to you?

I hope it means a good magazine will get even better. I intend to continue with the slick format, good graphics, and quality articles — everything that made TSG what it is. TSG was the first SF/fantasy game magazine, and the first one to win the Charles Roberts Award. Now it's the only magazine of its kind not affiliated with a game publisher. And independence will make it possible for TSG to do some new things that I hope you'll like.

I will admit, right here at the beginning, that I'm taking a gamble. TSG has been a regular money-loser for Metagaming. I know it's a good magazine; I'm gambling that I can turn it around and put it on a business-like basis — *without* sacrificing quality or gouging the gamers. So:

TSG will now accept commercial advertising. If you want to place an ad, contact us at Box 18805, Austin, TX 78760.

Print runs can be economized on. Right now TSG is printed entirely on slick, expensive paper. If we can find a less costly stock that still looks good, we may use it on some of the interior pages. Furthermore, Metagaming has always printed many more extra copies than it needed. That will cease as of now — so if you want back issues, this is the time to get them.

As of now, no further Patron Subscriptions will be sold. Howard is sending all present Patrons their $100 back before 1-31. Some "patron" or "lifetime" type offer may be made later. Right now I'll have to hold off.

Prices: Raising subscription and/or cover prices is always possible. Right now, TSG is the least expensive "real" magazine in the field. I'd like to keep it that way. If paper costs keep going up, there'll be no alternative but to increase prices. All I can say is that I'll try everything else first. Wish me luck.

* * *

Now the interesting part. New editorial policies:

NEWS OF OTHER COMPANIES: TSG will cover ALL personalities and companies involved with SF/fantasy gaming. You other publishers (yes, I know you're reading this!) send TSG your press releases, info, and rumors. We've got readers who want to know.

REVIEWS: I'm going to stick my neck out with a promise, as follows: *The Space Gamer will review* **every** *new SF/fantasy gaming release — game, supplement, play aid, miniature line, whatever — as long as we're sent a review copy.* TSG is going to be the magazine that covers *everything* and covers it *first.* These reviews won't be long — but they'll be complete. Which means we'll need more good reviewers. Where are you?

GAME MASTER: This will be a new column for questions about specific games and game problems. Send us a question of general interest, and we'll do our best to get the designer or company to answer. Failing that, we'll get you a *playable* answer, some way or other.

CONTESTS: Unless the Feedback shows you all hate the idea, TSG will start running regular contests — some based on specific games, others of a more general nature. Not "think of a cute name for the giant vampire twit" contests — but *brain* stuff. Suggestions gratefully accepted.

FICTION: Again, unless the Feedback shows you *really* don't *want* it, TSG will be looking for *good* science fiction and heroic fantasy pieces. I'm talking about name authors — or those who will be someday. We'll still look at any submission, no matter who it's from — but I want to print the best, or none at all.

GAME DESIGN SERIES: I'm talking with a local military-simulation buff about a series of articles, in collaboration. He provides the textbook knowledge; I provide the practical experience. These articles would set out, in detail, how to design a good simulation game AND how to sell or publish it after it's designed.

* * *

Some things that will stay the same, or almost:

GENERAL FORMAT: The overall mix of articles won't change much (at least until the Feedback comes in), and TSG will look about the same. There'll just be more variety.

WRITERS: Everyone who has written for TSG in the past, up to and including the notorious Red "John Galt" Darnigame, is invited to continue. That goes for artists, too. Standard rates will remain the same.

DEPARTMENTS: "News and Plugs" will continue, in expanded form. We will still be running a Letters column — so tell us what you think. The annual Game Survey will continue as long as people are interested enough to respond.

* * *

SJ biographical material — just so you'll know who you're dealing with:

I'm 26 years old; born in Oklahoma, went to high school and Rice University in Houston. Majored in biology and political science at Rice; spent two years as editor of the school paper, the *Thresher.* Moved to Austin to attend UT Law School; didn't finish my degree (and probably won't) due to increasing interest/success with gaming. Present occupations: free-lance writer and game designer; advertising (mostly in the game field); and, as of now, game magazine publisher. Hobbies and interests include science fiction, fantasy, and gaming (obviously), tropical fish, the Society for Creative Anachronism, anything outdoors, and newspaper and magazine work.

* * *

The new arrangement with TSG does *not* mean that I will no longer design games for Metagaming — nor does it mean that TSG will no longer cover Metagaming. I will remain what I have always been — a free-lance writer and game designer. My personal business relationship with Metagaming remains good; you can expect to see more *Fantasy Trip*, more Ogre-universe games, and some new things of mine from Metagaming in the next year.

As to TSG coverage of Metagaming: TSG will cover *all* publishers without favoritism. Any publisher sending us game material can be assured of a review. But I'm not forgetting that TSG *was* the Metagaming magazine — and that its present subscribers thought it would continue so. A lot of you probably *wanted* to see a high proportion of Metagaming info. Therefore, for at least the next year, Howard Thompson will write a column to tell about developments at Metagaming. I think that's a good compromise. The magazine will treat all publishers equally — but there'll be one page to fulfill our responsibilities to the people who *want* to read about Metagaming.

* * *

Two closing notes:

FEEDBACK: The third annual Game Survey is in this issue. Part of the Survey is a set of feedback questions about TSG itself. I need to know what *you* want in the way of content — so please return the survey. It will have a very large effect on the way TSG goes.

IN THE LABYRINTH: By the time you read this, ITL will be at the printers'. Finally. I assume Howard has an estimated availability date somewhere in this issue. Soon, I hope.

Have fun.

THE PSYCHOPATHOLOGY OF WARGAMERS

by

J. Eric Holmes

In *The Space Gamer* no. 24, Sept. - Oct. 1979, Mark Schulzinger writes a fascinating essay on "Psychology of Wargaming." In this article, most of which I find very insightful, he gives us what he claims to be a Freudian interpretation of gaming. Now I am, myself, pretty much of a Freudian. I am not a psychiatrist, but I have had training in psychiatry and I have had a personal Freudian analysis. But Schulzinger's analysis of the wargame as an act of coitus is a bad example of the kind of superficial and (forgive me, Mark) sophomoric Freudianism that turns most people from psychoanalysis and prevents them from learning anything from it. A little study of psychoanalysis makes reading sexual symbolism into things easy and, for some people, a lot of fun.

Sure, there is sexual symbolism in wargaming. There's even more in fantasy role playing -- all those characters with their magic swords and magic wands and other phallic symbols invading the deep, dark, mysterious tunnels and corriders in search of an unknown treasure. But pointing out the sexual symbolism in an act is not enough to explain it.

A behavior as complex as wargaming is going to have many psychological determinants, and for a particular gamer, some will be more important than others. Let's have a look at some of them.

In the first place, a wargame is both a war and a game. If you ask most gamers why they play the game they'll answer, "I want to win." The game is a contest, a competition, and people play for much the same reason other people play tennis or football. There is an exhilaration to beating one's opponent, to being better than the other player. This drive may be innate in the human brain, Schulzinger and I may suspect it has its roots in the Oedipal conflict between father and child, it doesn't matter. One reason for playing is to beat the other guy.

There are other reasons for playing a game. Playing is a way of learning to master new situations. So is dreaming. Confront homo sapien with a new, challenging, perhaps frightening, situation and he will dream about it. He will daydream about it, going over and over in his mind, imagining different possibilities, different courses of action, trying to learn to deal with his emotional reactions. A good game is designed to bring out this same response, to make the gamer want to manipulate the pieces, to try different approaches. It's a basic, curiosity sort of drive, as Schulzinger suggests, and it makes the gamer say "I can do that!" And then, of course, if he succeeds, there is the additional thrill of conquest and achievement mentioned above.

These are good reasons for playing a game. But a wargame is special because it is a war. Schulzinger points out that warfare is a basic human trait, "It occurs to me that, if mankind has any one real ability, it's the ability to wage war." I doubt, however, that war is just a sexual outlet. Freud believed it was an expression of an aggressive or death instinct as powerful as the reproductive instinct. In *Civilization and Its Discontents,* Freud says, "Men are not gentle creatures who want to be loved, and who at the most can defend themselves if they are attacked; they are, on the contrary, creatures among whose instinctual endowments is to be reckoned a powerful share of aggressiveness. As a result, their neighbor is for them not only a potential helper or sexual object, but also someone who tempts them to satisfy their aggressiveness on him, to exploit his capacity for work without compensation, to use him sexually without his consent, to seize his possessions, to humiliate him, to cause him pain, to torture and to kill him. *Homo homini lupus.* (Man is a wolf to man.)"

If all these aggressive impulses surge in the human breast, then wargaming is obviously a way of dealing with them, even acting them out to some limited extent, in a harmless, non-dangerous fashion. This is exactly what the grandfather of wargaming, H.G. Wells, proposed as the real value of the game. In *Little Wars,* he says, "How much better is this amiable miniature than the Real Thing? Here is a homeopathic remedy for the imaginative strategist. Here is the premeditation, the thrill, the strain of accumulating victory or disaster -- and no smashed or sanguinary bodies, no shattered fine buildings nor devastated countrysides, no petty cruelties, none of that awful universal boredom and embitterment, that tiresome delay or stoppage or embarrassment of every gracious, bold, sweet, and charming thing, that we who are old enough to remember a real modern war know to be the reality of belligerence."

What is proposed is that the impulse to war is a perfectly natural human emotion. Wargaming is just one way of trying to deal with these feelings, no more effective or healthy than, say, watching Monday night footbal on TV. Why one sport appeals to one person and the other to another is a matter of personality development, and individual traits, either inborn or learned. Wargaming is a way of dealing with competitive, aggressive, hostile impulses, using imaginative play as an outlet. There is no evidence that gamers have more or less success in managing their impulses than those who use other mechanisms, or who become pacifists or prize-fighters. We all use many mental mechanisms -- playing games is probably a minor one. I doubt that a group of wargamers denied all game playing would begin hitting their friends. Wargaming is a nice out-

let, but most people do fine without it. Are gamers "sick" in some way, then? No, I think just a little different. One might even argue that because they have this outlet, gamers have less trouble with aggression in other parts of their lives, but I know of no evidence that gamers are any healthier than the rest of humanity. They probably beat their wives and children, run into things with their cars, and watch cop shows on TV, just like everybody else.

In his article, Schulzinger says war is sexual. "Freud may have talked about the death instinct, but later Freudians realize that sex and war are too closely related to require any additional theories." This sounds like baloney to me. The best one might do with a theory is suggest that sexual *frustration* leads to increased aggression which finds an outlet in warfare. As a theory, it's weak. Schulzinger tells us that it is a "documented fact" that men get erections and ejaculations in battle. He doesn't tell us where it is documented. Norman Mailer, in his novel *The Naked and the Dead* tells us that troops going into combat worry about losing control of their anal sphincters and crapping in their pants. In a large group of men called upon to wound and kill other men, there will probably be some who become sexually excited, many more will be frightened and sick, some will vomit. With time, troops become somewhat accustomed to the stress of battle. One good method is to reassure yourself that the enemy is not really human, they are only "gooks"or "Krauts" and don't really matter. I sincerely doubt that sexual satisfaction is a motive for war except in a few unusual cases. Talk to some veterans, Mark! Reactions to combat are complex. When you hit one of the other guys there is an exultation, "Wow, got him!" When you're caught in an artillery barrage or pinned by machine gun fire you don't feel excited, sexually or otherwise. Your penis gets very small and you wish the rest of you could follow suit. Readers interested in the soldier's reaction to combat should read John Keegan's excellent book, *The Face of Battle.*

The psychological drives to warfare are too deep and complex for Schulzinger and I to unravel. Given the existence of such drives, however, war*gaming* is obviously one way to try to deal with them. There will be other motives for wargaming -- a chance to socialize, desire to imitate someone you admire, a chance to collect things. . .and probably many others.

If all this is reasonably correct, why are most wargamers young males? Certainly the most startling psychological observation one can make at a gaming convention is that there are no female wargamers. The occasional exception (H.G. Wells calls them. . ."girls of the better sort, and a few rare and gifted women.") only prove the rules.

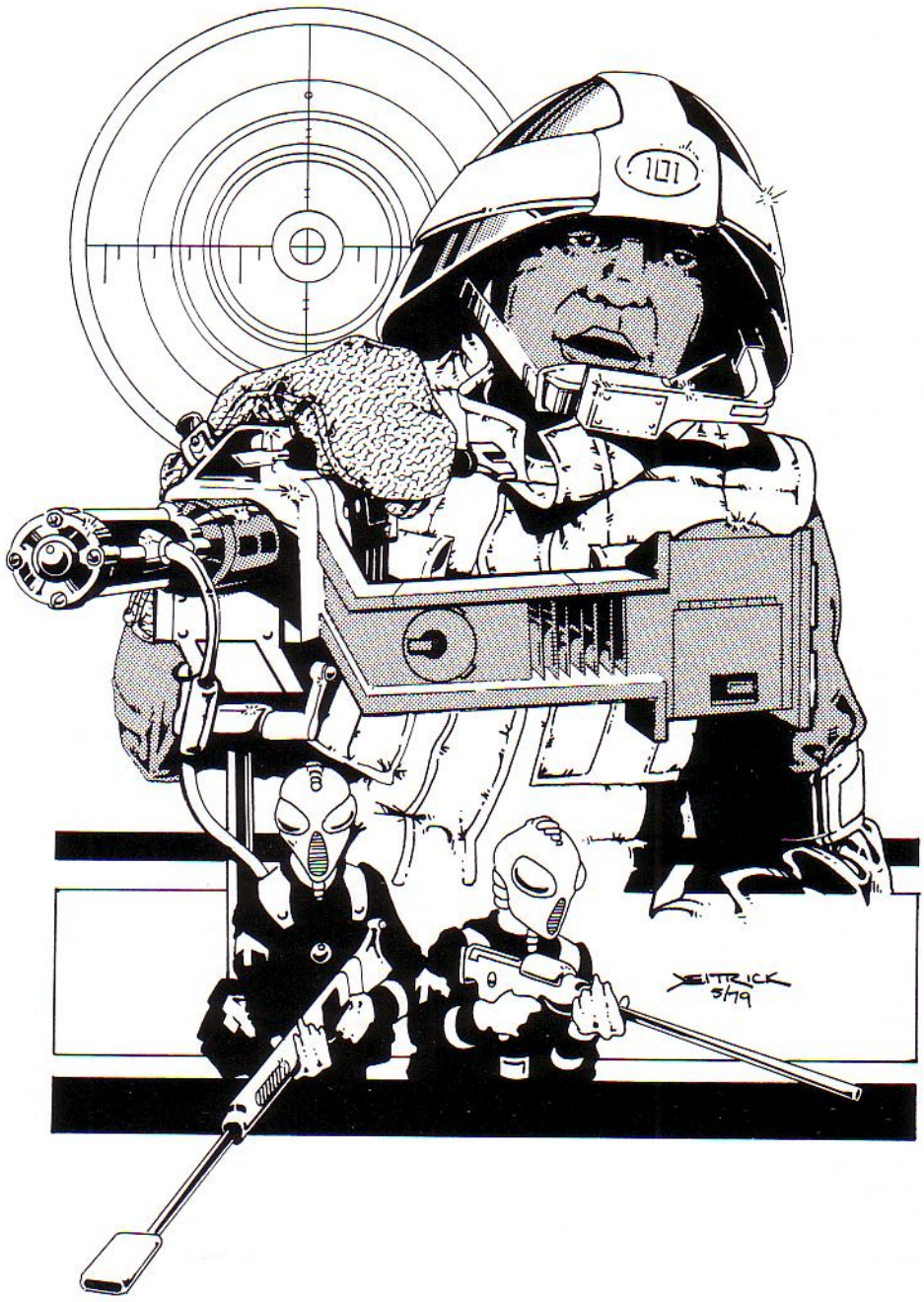
If the theory given above is correct, one would assume that all gamers being males means that males have more aggression to deal with, or that they have particular problems in dealing with it. While the first assumption, that males are innately more aggressive than females is attractive, and Schulzinger and I subscribe to it, I suppose most feminists, and those who have argued with them, would disagree. The differences may be all impressed on us as children by our society. After all, boys all know that they may grow up to fight in a war. Girls may grow up to fight, or be bombed, but society doesn't make much point of it.

Before you reject this view, consider the following scenario. Suppose you are the parent of a six year old girl and you find her playing happily with her dolls in her doll house. As you stand there, smiling proudly, you notice that she is having one of the dolls go from room to room in the doll house stabbing and poisoning each of the other dolls! Do you bundle her off to a psychologist for treatment? Do you shrug it off as being a re-play of last night's TV drama? You are probably upset either way.

Now suppose your six year old is a boy. You find him happily running over his toy soldiers with a toy tank, blowing them up with HE shells and incinerating the survivors with flame throwers. You smile proudly, he's a chip off the old block! (Unless you are a real pacifist. For a hilarious fictional treatment of that dilema, get a copy of Saki's short stories and read "The Toys of Peace.")

As boys become older some become more and more involved with toy soldiers (oops! military miniatures). Others drop gameplaying, adopt other pursuits. I don't think there's any evidence that one adjustment is any better than another. You certainly meet people at GenCon who seem to have problems getting along in the world. But I meet people like that at conventions of the American Psychological Association also, and certainly at the science fiction World Con. It might be an interesting study, take a representative sample of gamers, subject them to intensive psychological testing, compare results with a random sample of guys in the same age group. My guess is that the gamers would be slightly smarter than the average (you have to be able to read) and no more neurotic.

In summary then, I agree with most of Mark Schulzinger's article on psychology of wargamers, but I reject his suggestion that warfare is a sexual activity. Instead, I propose that it arises from a number of motives, an innate aggression, territoriality, fear of the unknown, desire for loot and probably some other factors. Wargaming is quite different from war, but does allow one to deal with aggression on a harmless symbolic level. It is also an outlet for curiosity, socialization with one's peers, the collecting instinct, competition and imitation. It's sexual content is pretty low, despite its selective male appeal.



Some Variations on Wizard

by Philip Carpenter

WIZARD is an interesting game featuring a one-on-one duel to the death between wizards in the infamous 'combat arena'. Part of *The Fantasy Trip,* it is designed to combine with the MicroGame MELEE, which is as strong on hand-to-hand combat as WIZARD is on sorcery and magical creatures. Yet after numerous games, one is left wanting more in the way of imaginative spells and creatures. I mean, one can throw only so many Magic Fists and Dazzle spells before soon tiring of the monotony of using these same spells over and over. So, I propose additional spells to be added to the list present in WIZARD; designed to add zing and modern-day relevance. These new spells have been tested in actual play between veteran gamer Mike Metzger, and myself. But first, some background on the basic game itself.

The board is ridiculously simple, representing an arena with no distinguishing features, aside from six shaded megahexes which act as the walls in the labyrinth game. Each player is assigned a warrior, who can summon wolves, bears, giants, dragons, etc., at will. All characters are assigned four attributes: Strength (ST), Dexterity (DX), Intelligence (IQ), and Movement Allowance (MA). Strength measures how much injury the character can take before dying, and also how many spells he can cast, as each spell costs in ST when cast. Dexterity indicates how likely the character is to succeed in hitting his target with either a spell or physical blow. Three dice are thrown, and if the total is equal to or less than DX, the attack is successful. Intelligence sets the number of spells available to the wizard as equal to the IQ level. The highest level of spells from which he may select is also equal to IQ. Movement is generally unalterable for any character: wizards can move 10 hexes per turn; wolves can move 12 hexes and bears 8. At the beginning of the game, each wizard is given 8 points each for ST, DX, and IQ, plus 8 more points to divide among the three areas as desired. Of course, the cautious player will restrict himself to lower level spells to keep from setting seriously low levels of ST and DX. This takes a lot of the fun out of the game. It is recommended that, once the players have established some experience, they allocate themselves more points to *any* of the three areas. Ten points added to the base level of 8 all around is certainly not unreasonable. In fact, why stop there? Surely the advanced player can intelligently use 12 additional points, or 15, or 20. . . after all, we do want an exciting game, and high-level spells, absolute dexterity, and unlimited strength will assure one.

Sample spells include *Magic Fist* (a tried-and-true favorite), a telekinetic punch which does damage to ST equivalent to combined dice rolls, number of rolls set by ST used to cast it; *Blur*, a defensive spell which reduces opponent's DX and makes it harder for him to strike you; *Illusion*, which casts a pseudo-creature with all the properties of a real creature except that additional ST need not be expended each turn to maintain (illusions, however, may be removed by taking the *Disbelieve* option, where three dice roll determines the effectiveness of dispelling a suspected illusion -- but that uses up one whole turn, and who wants to go to *that* trouble?); *Fire,* which creates same in one specific hex; *Levitation,* which increases movement alliance; and *Summon 7-Hex Dragon,* the ultimate creature. Unfortunately, in a labyrinth such a huge figure can barely find the space to move, hence setting itself up for numerous rear attacks. Even with its tail as a weapon, the dragon is at a distinct disadvantage. But, that's life.

Some notation here is in order. A typical spell may cost 2ST+1 to cast, which translates to saying it costs 2 ST units to cast initially (*if* the wizard casts successfully in the first place) and one more ST unit each following turn to maintain. Its damage may be 1+2, which means the victim's ST is reduced by the value of 1 die roll, with 2 added on.

Now that that's been established, let's review the new spells, which give a badly needed contemporary flair to an otherwise outdated scenario. Before the spells are the IQ levels, indicating their level of sophistication.

8 -- **Glasses, False Nose & Moustache (T).** Creates a disguise which makes it difficult for the opponent to identify you. Reduces his DX by 3 points when trying to locate you. Costs 2ST+1.

Fat (T). If victim is in a kneeling or lying position, this forces him to remain there, unable to get up. Costs 2ST+1; 3ST if the victim weighs less initially than a human.

9 -- **Dancing Brass Knuckles (C).** Similiar to the famous Dancing Sword. Creates a flying weapon which can attack any enemy figure on the board (although limited to one victim per turn). ST 3, DX 13, IQ 2. Does 1-3 damage. Costs 2 ST+1.

Disco (C). Gives the wizard extraordinary coordination and speed, as well as a spiffy white suit. Increases his DX by however many ST he cares to put into it. Must renew each turn with more ST points.

10 -- **EPA Evaluation (S).** Defensive spell against a fireball spell. If successful, halts a fireball in mid-flight while environmental guidelines are checked for presence of smoke and noxious gases. Then, it eliminates fireball.

Hemorrhoid (T). Causes victim 1 die roll of damage to DX, due to fierce itching and scratching. Costs 2 ST.

11 -- **Summon Nymphomaniac.** Creates a female warrior who tries to engage victim in marathon sex, causing 1 ST damage for each turn attacking successfully. ST 10, DX 13, IQ 8, MA 10. Costs 2 ST+1.

Satyr (T). Defensive against nymphomaniac. Causes the wizard to become virile enough to satisfy her demands for three turns. However, if for any reason the nymphomaniac does not engage the wizard during any of those three turns, his DX is reduced by 1 for that turn for obvious reasons. Costs 1 ST.

Dancing Sword (C). Similiar to Dancing Brass Knuckles. ST 4, DX 14, IQ 2. Does 1-1 damage. Costs 3 ST+1.

12 -- **Neutron Bomb (T).** Destroys all lifeforms in the wizard's megahex (except the wizard himself, of course) and all adjacent megahexes. However, leaves intact walls, slippery floors, etc. Costs 5 ST.

Artillery Shell (M). Lobs armor-piercing missile over obstructions, such as walls, to victim on other side. Does 2 damage. Reduces DX by 1 for every megahex the victim is from the wizard. Costs 4 ST.

Summon Killer Bees (C). Creates swarm of insects which must remain in the hex where they are created. ST 4, DX 16, IQ 2, MA 20. Does 1 hit damage per turn. Costs 2 ST+1.

13 -- **Spanish Moss (C).** Creates one hex of slimey, gooey, icky vegatation (yech!) that stops and chokes anyone entering it. Creature must roll DX to escape, sword adding 2 to DX. Costs 3 ST.

Summon Osmondoids (C). Creates a pair of creatures, Donny and Marie, which stay in the same hex and are treated as one creature. Damage: does 1 ST (due to heavy retching), 1 DX (their teeth blind the victim), and 1 IQ (self-explanatory). ST 10, DX 12, IQ 8, MA 10. Costs 3 ST+1.

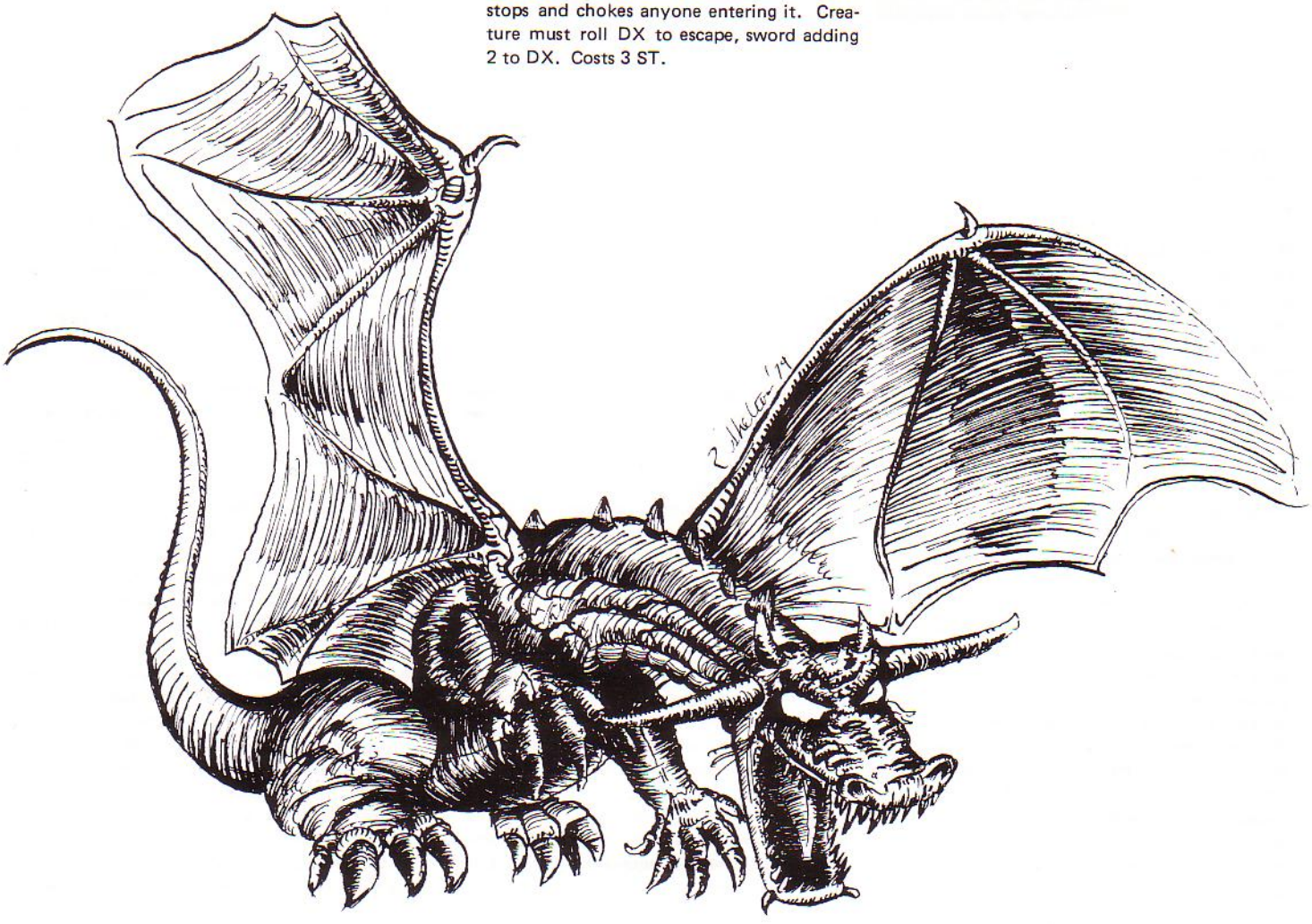
14 -- **Skylab (C).** Causes one megahex of total destruction due to crashing space station. Not only kills all creatures, but smashes walls, snuffs out fires, etc. Costs 4 ST.

Smoke (T). Enables wizard to walk through walls and creatures, but MA is halved. Allows him to ignore slippery floor, fire, etc. Costs 4 ST.

15 -- **Clone (C).** Creates an exact duplicate of wizard, with all attributes identical to original at moment of creation. If first wizard dies, the clone may continue in his role. Costs 5 ST.

16 -- **Summon 12 hex battleship (C).** ST 80, DX 10, IQ 7, MA 3. Its usefullness is questionable in the labyrinth. Its guns do 1 damage for every ST put into them. Costs 6 ST+2.

Summon Captain Marvel (C). ST 75, DX 14, IQ 11, MA 15. Can engage *only* in hand-to-hand combat. Costs 6 ST+2.



OneWorld

a designer's introduction

by

W.G. Armintrout

What can I say about my first game ever? I am so proud of the darn thing that I am beyond modesty--but then you were hardly expecting an unbiased, critical report from the designer, were you?

Let me introduce myself. I am W. G. ("Wargamer") Armintrout, white human male, 21 years old, native of Northern California. I enjoy all the benefits of a college education, and presently deal with high explosives for the U.S. Defense and Readiness Command. I began SF gaming in 1976 with STELLAR CONQUEST (Metagaming), and I have been an addict ever since. One World is my first game design to be sold.

One World is a small universe bordered on all sides by the havoc of Chaos Itself. Most of the universe is covered by the Plains of the Singing Grasses. In some portions--noteably the central region--the land rears up to form the Crystal Pylons. Rows of ancient markers--the Runelines--swirl through the plains and present an obstacle to movement. In other spots, the viscosity of the chaotic ether has seeped through the layers of reality to form surface pools of nothingness, where beings can be swept into Nowhere.

This universe contains two gods, Borg and Chez, and their respective families. Each god wants sole godhood over the One World. However, since neither god likes to get involved in such pedestrian matters, the war must be conducted by the Children of the Gods. Each child is identical, but can manifest itself in any of three aspects:

STONE— the Great White Boulder. It moves in great bounds across the landscape (one hex per turn). Stone is the only Child which can travel from grassy plain to Crystal Pylon. It is also immune to the Faults of Chaos (those pools of nothingness), since Stone can bound over them.

BLADE— the Obsidian Scythe. The Blade is the fastest of all the Children of the Gods, moving along by slicing down the graceful singing grasses. Unfortunately, it moves so fast that it cannot turn--moving five hexes per turn *in a straight line.* Only Blade, with its great speed, can penetrate the barriers of the Runelines.

FOG— the Drifting Cloud. Traveling on the breeze of its own wind, this Child has no special abilities. It travels three hexes per turn.

The object of the game is to kill the enemy god. Since gods have three lives, this can be difficult. Especially considering the format of combat in One World.

For instance, let's look at Child-to-Child combat. Whenever enemy Children meet in the same hex, battle is inevitable. The stacking limit is three Children per player. A fight can include as few as two, or as many as six combatants. Combat is resolved in two steps:

**Metamorphosis:* Just prior to fighting, Children gain the ability to transform their aspect. A Stone has the option of changing into Blade, Fog, or remaining a Stone. Each player conducts metamorphosis in secret.

**Confrontation:* Players now reveal their chosen aspects. Casualties are determined by three simple rules:

For each friendly Stone, one enemy Blade is eliminated.

For each friendly Blade, one enemy Fog is eliminated.

For each enemy Fog, one enemy Stone is eliminated.

If both sides survive combat, players again go through Metamorphosis and Confrontation. When only one force remains, it returns its surviving Children to the mapsheet in the last aspects they assumed in combat.

The destroyed units are placed beneath each player's Tower of Balance, located near the center of the universe. These Towers, constructed eons ago by unknown intelligences, labor to maintain the status quo. In every turn in which a player is missing a Child, the Tower generates a replacement. The aspects of the new Children are determined randomly.

The important battles of the game involve Child and God, and are conducted similarly to normal combat. Each side chooses an aspect, the aspects are revealed, and casualties are taken. However, a God can be attacked by only one enemy Child per turn. The Child is always destroyed, even if it wins the fighting (the Children find satisfaction in taking an enemy with them). If the God loses the fight, it only loses one of its several lives.

One of my favorite parts of this game is the long list of optional rules. When you've played a game a lot and the old excitement is gone, it can really do wonders to insert some new rule which changes the whole flavor of the game. The optional rules for One World can really swing you off balance if you're used to the basic game. Rules include The Chaos Gambit I & II (introducing suicide moves into Chaos to get new forces at the Towers of Balance), Moving Gods (allowing gods to get mad and start moving around after losing one life), the Never Ending World option (rearranging the mapsheet), and the ever-useful Frustration Clause.

In case you can't tell, I *like* One World. I got lucky. The game came out the way I wanted when I started designing. Everyone will have their own favorite points, but some of my favorite are:

The Great Stone Question Will he, or won't he? That is, will the player who is attacking me dare to metamorphize into a Stone--thereby bogging down his movement--simply because I won't expect him to? If he isn't going to use Stones, I won't need Fog, but I better not use Blades in case he does go to Stones, or maybe he'll use all Fog and. . .

How Many Casualties? In any combat in which a player has three Children, he can guarantee a kill simply by choosing Stone, Blade and Fog. No matter what the other player chooses, one enemy will die. On the other hand, choosing Stone, Blade and Fog together also guarantees one of them will die -- assured kill, and an assured casualty. Is it worth it? Or is it better to gamble and choose all Fog, hoping the other guy will concentrate on Stones and forget about Blades? Or maybe two Fog and one Blade, hoping that he won't choose Stones to kill all the Blades. . .

Those Darn Blades Blades are the fastest units on the board. They do great on the open plains, where the Runelines are powerless to stop them. So why do so many players go to Fog as their basic force? Because Blades have to move in a straight line, and movement can get difficult in the twisting passages among the Crystal Pylons in the central board. Once a player has caught the knack of planning ahead a few turns, Blades can become a formidable unit as picking a pre-selected course and arriving on target before anything else. On the other hand, a good defensive player can also predict enemy Blade movement ahead of time and provide suitable units for interception.

Strategic Spots The terrain is really important in One World. The major passages through the center of the board can be guarded at a few select places. Sometimes, the game will be settled when one player can isolate another player from the rest of the universe, if a good wedge can be placed between the enemy god and his defenders, and the reinforcing Tower of

Balance.

It would be a great mistake to assume that, just because I designed this game, I know anything at all about the best ways to play it. In fact, I am looking forward to someday meeting some Grand Champions of One World, and finding out what they think the best strategies are. Nevertheless, let me make a few comments on strategy and tactics.

Skill makes a great deal of difference. A veteran player should be able to walk all over a novice, simply from being familiar with how the units move and where the important terrain points are. When two veterans play, the game can be won or lost on which player can exploit the other's mistakes fastest.

There seem to be two theories of over-all strategy. I prefer the Grand Offensive method of play. The object is to launch a massive attack with all available forces in the first turns of the game. Your opponent gets locked into his corner and never recovers. This all-out fighting swiftly cuts down the number of forces on both sides, usually forcing a wait-and-see period of raid and attrition. Eventually, either player accumulates enough reserves to get going again. One of the great unsolved mysteries of this very offensive strategy is whether to strike at the enemy God (the object of the game), or at the enemy Tower of Balance (the source of reinforcements). I don't have an answer. Players will have to decide for themselves.

The other popular method is called the Feline strategy because it resembles two cats dueling for advantage. Each player fells out the other, using a barrage of probes into undefended regions, small strikes at key pylon passes, and mysterious movements of units behind the front lines. Sooner or later, when conditions look right, the strike which is intended to wipe out the enemy in a few scant turns comes, I must admit, the Feline strategy sounds much more sophisticated than my own Grand Offensive preference.

Experience has taught me the advantages of both strategies. I have pounded Felines to death with a well-led Grand Offensive, while I have also been picked apart by those same players in later games.

As I end this article, let me make a few prophecies. You see, I'm really enthused about this game! I think it's going to go places! So watch your gaming magazines and see if these predictions don't come true:

New Years Day, Austin -- Metagaming, the second largest gaming company in the USA, today announced it had rejected Avalon Hill's offer of half a million dollars for the copyright to One World, still the most popular game in history. Said Howard Thompson, speaking for the company, "I know a gold mine when I see it."

February, 1980, New York -- At the World Gaming Convention, gamers were surprised to see the new lines in wargames from established companies. Titles featured included Two World, Three World, Ten World. . . Said W. G. Armintrout, guru of the new movement, "Imitations stink."

June, 1980, Houston – The latest fad is sweeping the country! Brog and Chez clubs and fraternities are springing up everywhere. Meanwhile, the Astrodome today set an all-time attendance record as the One World Con began its three-week stay.

June, 1980, Paris – Brockton and Associates, the largest auction dealers in the British Isles, today reported selling a deluxe carved edition of One World for well in excess of $110,032.

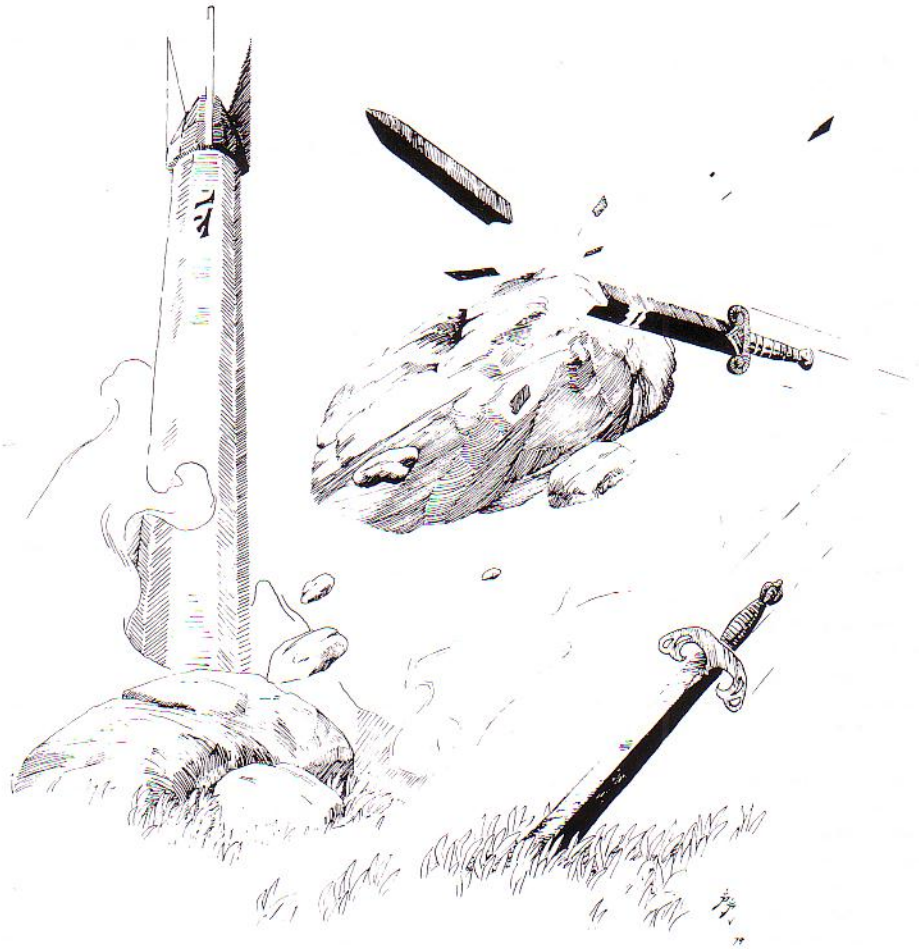
August, 1980, Bahamas -- The World Championship One World Convention today began in the Bahamas. W. G. Armintrout, now retired and making a living on the lecture circuit, announced plans to begin editing a new fan magazine, The One World Gazette. Overseas lines have been tied up for hours with fans interested in subscribing.

So get in on the ground floor! Join the Mob! Get One World, and make me a celebrity in my own lifetime. Woud I tell you wrong?

Meanwhile, in case anyone wants to make suggestions or hurl epithets, I can often be reached at the following address:

W. G. Armintrout
8N 2W
Tooele, Utah 84074

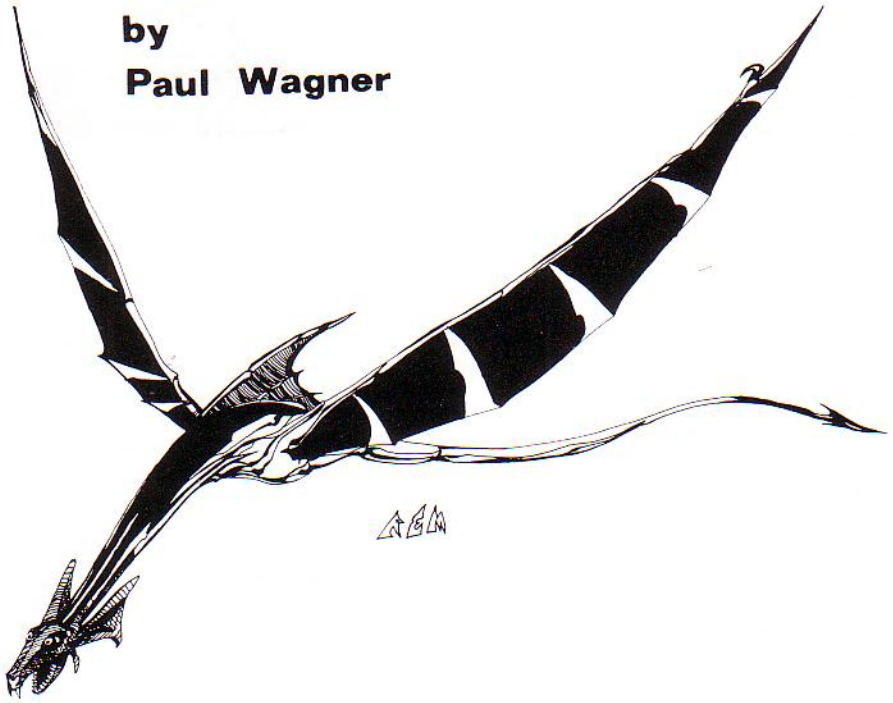
Happy gaming!



A Variety of Hobbits

by

Paul Wagner



Anyone who knows anything about Hobbits probably recalls the phrase "Hobbits dress in bright colours (chiefly green and yellow); wear no shoes, because their feet grow natural leathery soles and thick warm brown hair like the stuff on their heads. . . and have long clever brown fingers." After a while one gets bored continually painting Hobbits that fulfill these requirements. A small bit of reference work discloses that not *all* Hobbits are of these physical characteristics, but rather the majority; the above phrase is merely a general description of the Hobbit as a game.

Before their Wandering Days (probably some time before the Third Age of Middle Earth), the Hobbits lived between the Misty Mountains and Greenwood the Great (later to become Mirkwood). The multiplying of men in this area and the darkening of the nearby woodlands is said to have accounted for the perilous exodus and resettling of these creatures. However, even before their wandering had begun, Tolkien states "the Hobbits had already become divided into three somewhat different breeds: Harfoots, Stoors, and Fallohides." After their journeying, these species in turn settled and interbred in Eriador, the region which contains Hobbiton, the Shire, and quite a bit more. It is, therefore, very difficult to claim that a contemporary Hobbit (of the time of the Ring Trilogy) is of one specific type (Harfoot, Stoor, or Fallohide), but rather he is a mixture of two or more and is said to be of one blood more than another.

Before their great move, this is how each Hobbit type appeared:

HARFOOTS– Browner of skin than most Hobbits, they were also smaller and shorter, beardless and bootless, their hands and feet neat and nimble. They preferred highlands and hillsides. In ancient times they were on friendly terms with Dwarves and had lived in the foothills of mountains. They roamed far and wide over Eriador before settling down, and are the most numerous and normal representative of the Hobbit individual. They were most inclined to settle in one place and built tunnels and Hobbit holes.

STOORS-- The "river-variety" Hobbit, who once lived on the shores of the great river Anduin. They were broad and heavy of build, especially in their hands and feet, and they had many dealings with men in ancient times. After the Westmarch, they settled at first in what is now the South Farthing (between Tharbad and Dunland) before moving and settling in the East Farthing specifically between the Old Forest and the Brandywine River and the surrounding area. Stoors are the only Hobbits known who grow a down on their chins; no Harfoot or Fallohide ever had any trace of a beard.

FALLOHIDES– These Hobbits were taller and slimmer than most, and were also fairer of both skin and hair. They loved the trees and woodlands and were friendly with Elves long ago. The settling of most of Eriador (and all the Farthings) was accomplished under the guidance of the Fallohide brothers Marcho and Blanco. However, the band of Hobbits who followed them were of unknown or unrecorded lineage (probably lots of Harfoots), and thus one cannot state that the Fallohides settled in one specific area. Let it be said though that the Hobbits of the Westfarthing lived closest to the sea and the Elf towers which illuminated their western marches, and in old days seemed to have the most to do with the Elven people. In later days even this Farthing grew isolated, and Hobbits there learned to fear both the seas and the Elves. The Fallohides were the least numerous of the original Hobbit settlers, and they mingled with all the other Hobbits of the areas. Being somewhat bolder and more adventurous, however, "they are now often found as leaders or chieftains among clans of Harfoots or Stoors."

Getting back to the original question of painting Hobbits, the modeller is asked to use a little common sense and imagination. The standard Hobbit is probably descended from the Harfoot variety, and therefore must have dark (brown) hair and skin though individuals may vary in shades of darkness. (It is doubtful that these Hobbits were *very* dark or black, as they in turn note the unusual dark skin colors of the Orcs of the Uruk-Hai and the men out of Far Harad.) Those with Fallohide blood may have a lighter complexion and light hair color (perhaps a sandy blonde). These later individuals are probably very rare as Hobbits go. Stoors will look much the same as Harfoots, though they may have very light beards also.

The following list of Hobbits and their ancestry is compiled largely from direct references made by Tolkien with some responsible analytical thinking about those whose certain heritage is unclear:

Bagginses, Sackville-Bagginses, Gamgees, Grubbs, Twofoots, Proudfoots, Bracegirdles--Probably total Harfoot descent.

Boffins, Bolgers, Tooks, Chubbs--Mostly Harfoot, but with a bit of Fallohide mixed in.

Brandybucks, Oldbucks, Hornblowers, Gorbadcos, Maggots--Mostly Stoor, with Fallohide and perhaps some Harfoot also.

Burrowses, Brockhouses, Goodbodies--Unknown, but since they are related to Bilbo Baggins probably total Harfoot.

Bilbo Baggins--His mother was Belladonna Took and his father Bungo Baggins, so Bilbo is mostly Harfoot with some Fallohide.

Frodo Baggins--His mother was Primula Brandybuck and his father Drogo Baggins, so Frodo was Harfoot, Stoor, and Fallohide mixed.

Peregrine Took--As a Took, Pippin was of mixed Harfoot and Fallohide descent.

Meridoc Brandybuck--As a Brandybuck, Merry was of Stoor and Fallohide blood. (Although having much Stoor blood, Merry should not have a beard because of his youth.)

Smeagol--Gollum was an offshoot of Stoor blood.

I hope this is a useful reference for those who wish to add a little variety in their painting of Hobbits. If you wish to check further into this material, I would suggest reading THE HOBBIT and the entire Ring Trilogy, paying particular attention to Chapter 1 of THE HOBBIT, the prologue of THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING, and Appendix F and the Indices of THE RETURN OF THE KING. All of the above information and more can be found with careful examination.

DEFENSIVE TACTICS and STRATEGY in G.E.V. by Tim Solis

Friends, are you tired, listless, and worn out at the prospect of being the defensive player in G.E.V.? Do you think of yourself as Poland being invaded by Germany or Pearl Harbor waiting for the inevitable surprise attack by the Imperial Japanese Air Force? Do you feel doomed to play the part of Napoleon at Waterloo? If the answer to some or all of these questions is a resounding yes, then this article may be just the thing you need (besides a good shrink to get rid of that weird inferiority complex).

TACTICS

Terrain plays a significant role in warfare, especially in defense. By examining the terrain and placing your units accordingly, it is possible to route the enemy's units to areas where you are ready and waiting. For example, in the BREAKTHROUGH scenario note the terrain at the northern edge of the G.E.V. map. The swamp and forest hexes are obstacles to most types of vehicles, especially GEVs. The most favorable terrain is the road hexes, and, after that, the clear hexes. Therefore, in situations involving a time element, the enemy will try to take the path of least resistance. Figure 1 shows the three most direct paths to the northern edge of the board. For this reason, you should block these paths and ignore the swamp and forest hexes. This will force the Combine player to do one of three things: 1) Send his GEVs through the forest. 2) Attempt to clear away Paneuropean forces from one or more of the direct paths. 3) Split his forces and attempt to do both.

UNIT TYPES

The types of units chosen should be considered carefully since some of them can't be used as effectively as others. Let's look at the units in G.E.V. and their capabilities *for defense:*

Infantry: Since the advent of the tank, the infantry is no longer regarded as the "queen of battle". However, they are still valuable to take and/or hold objectives whether they be bridges, towns, roads or what have you.

Light Tank: Sometimes underrated, this vehicle can prove to be a blessing. Being on the defensive side, you never have enough units, but you can get two light tanks for the price of one heavy tank.

Missile Tank: This weapon has a good range and moderate firepower. It can be used quite effectively in a defensive role provided it has a clear line-of-sight for targets that enter its four-hex range.

Heavy Tank: This vehicle is always good to block the really tough areas where a breakthrough is suspected to take place, and as a general utility weapon.

Ground Effect Vehicle: At first glance this might seem a logical choice---fighting fire with fire. However, the primary advantage of a GEV is its speed which you just don't need. Time works to your advantage, so GEVs should be left to the offensives or for special situations (e.g., an Ogre attack).

Mobile Howitzer: This vehicle has a good range and firepower but its cost and slow movement rule it out as a purely defensive weapon.

Howitzer: This weapon fails the defensive criteria for the same reason as the mobile howitzer.

STRATEGY

There are basically two schools of thought on a game of this type when it comes to defense. One of them is the continous front theory, in which the breakthrough problem is dealt with creation of by an uninterrupted line of units from one edge of the map to the other. This prevents the enemy from outflanking your forces. A continuous front not only puts a strain on the small number of forces you have, but when a breakthrough does occur, the parts of the line that remain intact will be spread so thin and far that catching up to the enemy will be almost impossible. This is not to say that this type of defense should be discarded altogether, but rather that it isn't suitable for defense on such a large scale without reinforcements.

The other type of strategy is the mobile defense which does not seek to stop the breakthrough but instead attempts to delay it for as long as possible. Let's face it, in three of the scenarios that's all they're asking you to do. In BREAKTHROUGH, all you have to do is stop the GEVs from getting off the board for so many turns. In RAID, you must prevent the enemy from completing his objectives until enough reinforcements arrive to push him back, and in THE TRAIN, you must stop the enemy from destroying the train/tracks until the train has gotten safely through.

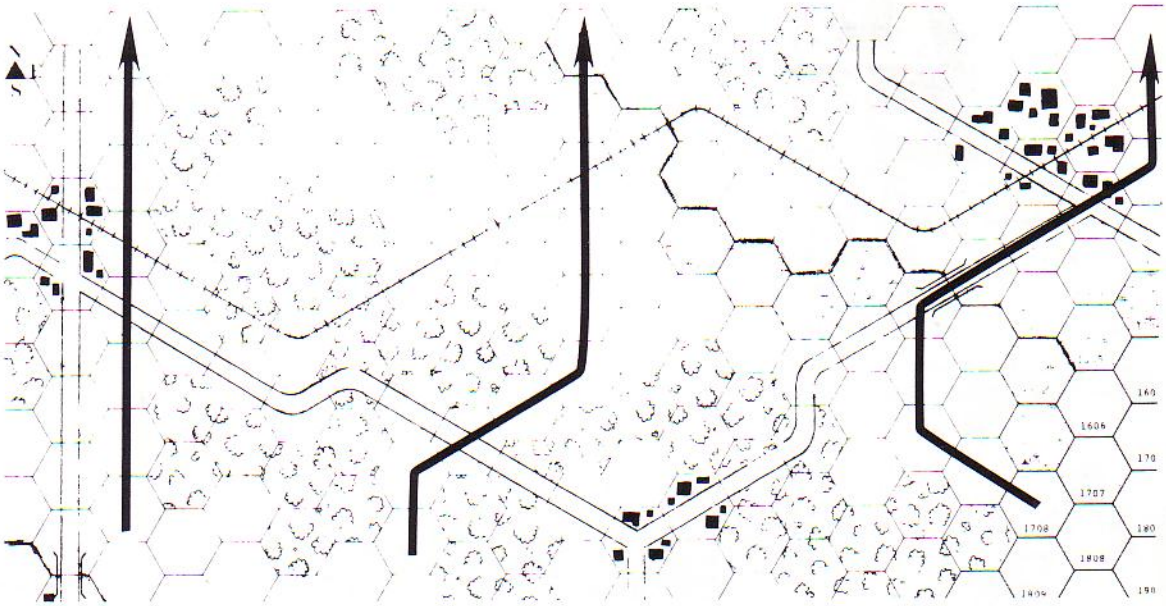
Just because you're playing a defensive role doesn't mean you have to sit there and wait for the Combine player to attack. Figure 2 shows the Paneuropean move after the Combine player's first move. The 2/1 infantry at hex 0414 will take care of any GEVs that attempt to enter the forest hexes south of it. Tank Group I is blocking the western path. Tank Group II guards the center path. Note that both Tank Groups are out of target range for any GEVs that are south of the stream that runs from hex 0617 and 1919 since most vehicles are required to stop at stream hexes and wait until the next turn to cross. This also gives both Tank Groups the opportunity to move out of their defensive positions to attack GEVs that are planning to cross the stream on their next turn. The infantry units north of Tank Group I are used as a secondary line of defense to block the western path. The eastern path is defended by Tank Group III. A 3/1 infantry unit is positioned to block the only clear hex in the area. The missile tank was included in this group because, due to the fact that there are no obstacles, it can destroy or disable a few GEVs before they can make it to the shore. Infantry units on road hexes are used as reinforcements and to block movement of GEVs.

The RAID defensive set-up might look something like Figure three. Since the Alpha CP is worth a fat 25 points to the Combine player, it is wise to put it someplace far from the enemy and close to a reinforcement point. CP Beta should be placed on the northern edge of the mapboard but shouldn't use the escape option until the enemy closes in. The reason for this is to draw off some of the Combine units and tie them up so they can't be used for destroying bridges, cities, etc.

OGRES

To defend against an Ogre attack requires a change in game plan. What makes Ogres so tough to stop is every time you knock off a few treads it usually ends up creaming your forces on its turn. To minimize its ability to destroy your units, you will need weapons that have a moderate to long range capability to

Figure 1



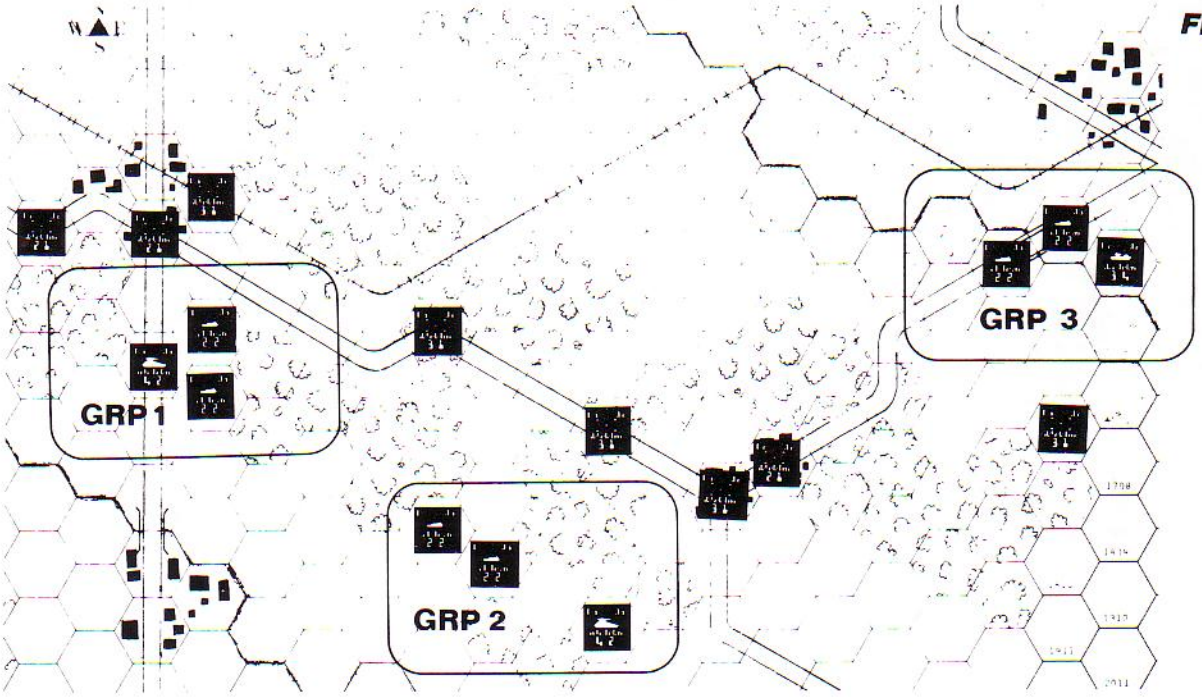
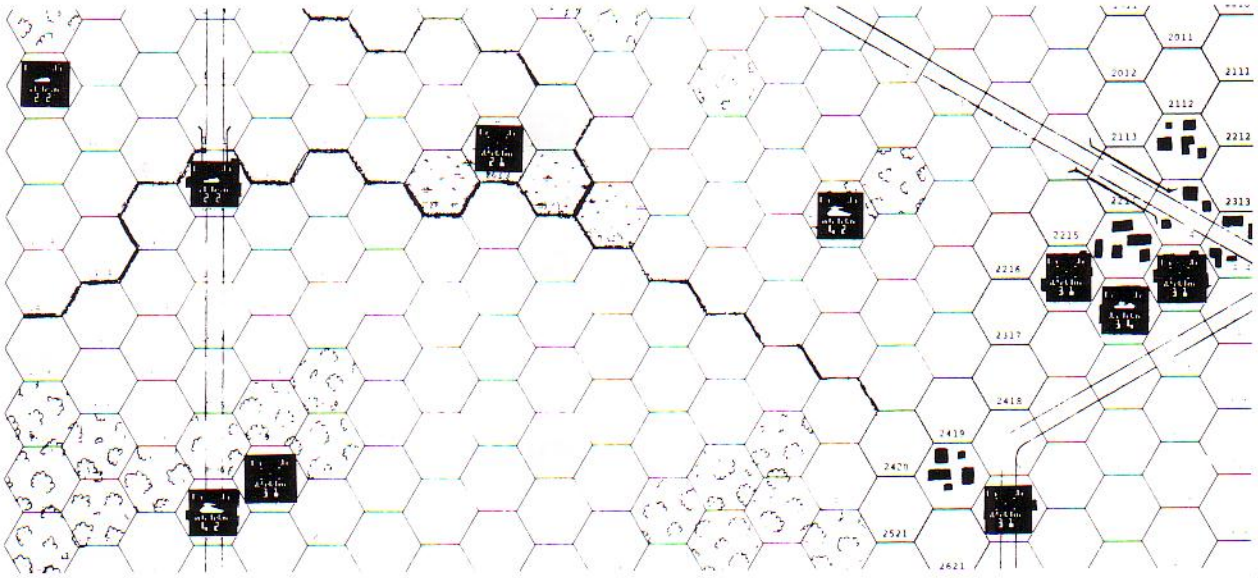


Figure 2

Figure 3



destroy the missile racks and main battery. After these weapons are destroyed, you should try for the treads. Figure four shows an attack on an Ogre with five GEVs. The black line starts at the hexes the GEVs occupied prior to movement. The dotted line traces the movement of the GEVs after they have made their attack (second movement phase). By using their second movement phase in this way, the GEVs function in much the same way as a moderately ranged weapon. Notice that the GEVs scatter in different directions which placed the Combine player on the horns of a dilema: Should he move the Ogre toward its objective and possibly suffer another attack by the GEVs or lose valuable time by pursuing them?

When you are the defensive player it is important to: 1) analyze the terrain and use it to your advantage. 2) pick the types of units best suited to a defensive posture. 3) choose a defensive strategy that is compatible with the victory conditions. 4) when an ogre scenario is used, the primary targets should be the missile racks and the secondary target should be the main battery. After these targets have been neutralized, the treads should become the final target.

I hope this article has done some good. I sincerely believe that if you follow not so much the content of this article but rather the logic used to find advantages and disadvantages, you will become a better player, both in offense and defense.

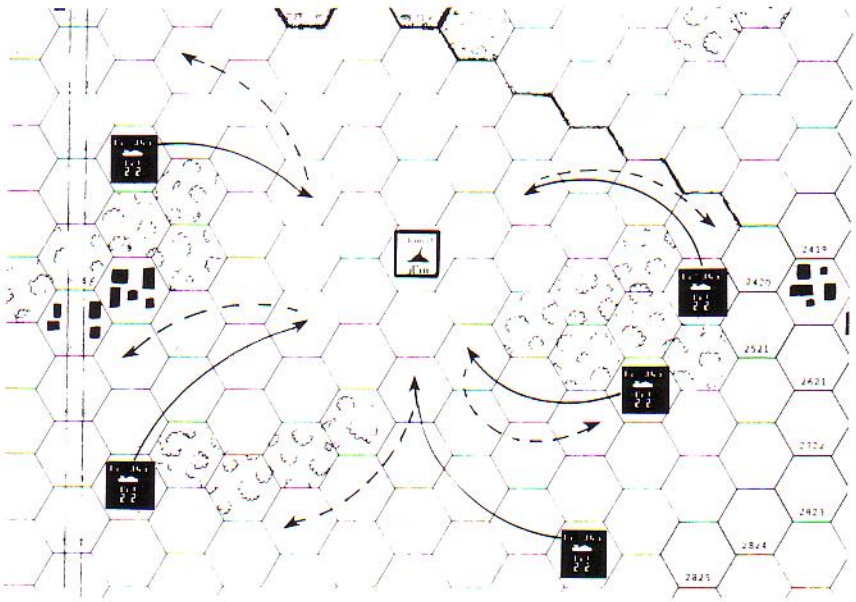
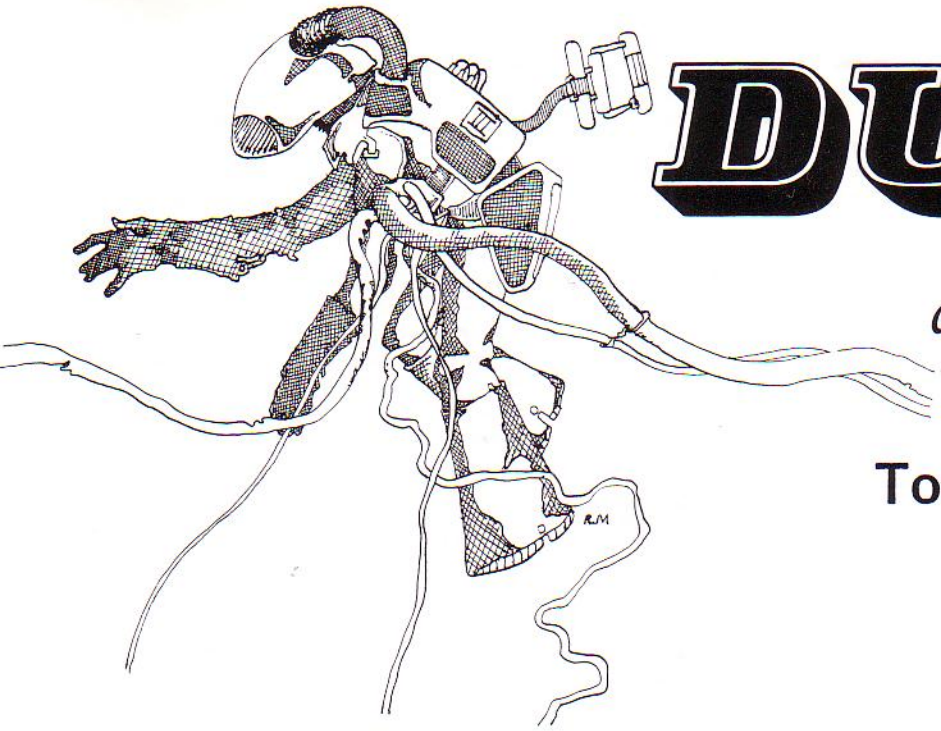


Figure 4



DUNE

a review

by

Tony Watson

In 1977, the people at Avalon Hill were very successful in adapting Robert Heinlein's popular SF novel *Starship Troopers* into a game format. The result was a pleasing and skillful blend of simulation and literature, a game both fun to play and remarkably true to its source. For the company's second SF release, AH has once again chosen a game based on a well-known book. This summer the company has published a new game on what is perhaps the most popular science fiction novel of all time, Frank Herbert's *Dune.* Once again the product is both a fine game and at the same time faithful to its namesake.

DUNE was designed by the same group which did the innovative COSMIC ENCOUNTER a few years back. The parentage shows. The two games have some strong resemblances in both their game systems and the attention paid to physical components. As in COSMIC ENCOUNTER, an effort has been made to reflect the individual natures of the various contending forces. The outcome is a dual success: a fast-paced, interactive game, and a colorful and surprisingly interpretation of Herbert's book.

Physically, DUNE is an impressive game all the way around, as well it should be; it sports a price tag of $15. The high quality of the components does much to make the game both attractive and enhance the tie-in with the novel.

DUNE can be played by from two to six players, but we've found three is a more interesting minimum. Further, some of the characters work best when more people are playing. Each player chooses one of six factions, each represented on a colorful shield by a personage from the book (obstensibly representing the player himself). The six groups are: The House Atriedes, the newly enstated rulers of the spice planet Arrakis, represented by Paul Atriedes; The House Harkonnen, depicted by the evil Baron Harkonnen, the arch rivals of the Atriedes who seek the destruction of their enemies via treachery, violence and death; the House Corino, the imperial house of Emperor Shaddam IV, which seeks to maintain a delicate balance of power among the lower Houses; the Guild, the spacing cartel dependent on spice induced prescience for their navigation; the Bene Gesserite, the female order dedicated to shaping destiny by the manipulation of chromosomes with the Swisatz Haderach, the ultimate messiah, as the final goal; and finally the Fremen, Dune's native desert dwellings worm riders who seek to rid their world of off planet power groups, represented by the Imperial planetologist, Liet Kynes. Each player has a full color shield, a folded cardstock box, to denote the character they are playing. Each shield features a nicely done picture of the character mentioned above. The shield also serves two more utilitarian purposes. They can be used to conceal a player's spice tokens, armies in his off planet reserve, and treachery cards. Shields also list the special powers and advantages of that group.

The playing board for DUNE will be very familiar to those who have read the book. It is taken directly from the map Herbert provided with the novel. The map is done in shades of yellow for deserts and white for rock areas. Strongholds, such desert sietches or cities, are done in red. Despite the dominance of yellow, the map has a lot of texture. The board is divided into pie shaped wedges called sectors, used to regulate storm movement. Geographic features are named (again, after the information Herbert's book provides) and called areas. They are irregular in size and shape and used for purposes of movement, combat and spice collections.

Each side has five leaders for use in battles, and these personalities are represented on large discs bordered in that power group's color and bearing a likeness of each individual. Even though the drawings on the discs are done in black and white, I found the artwork on the leader counters to be quite good, in some ways superior to that on the shields. All of the leaders are characters mentioned in the book. Some figured promeninently, such as Gurney Halleck, Stilgar or Feyd Rautha. Others are just mentioned, such as the Bashar (actually a rank in the Imperial army). Leaders are rated for combat, with values from one to seven, most averaging around three or four. Leaders must have something to lead, and these armies are provided in the form of twenty die cut tokens per player in appropriate colors. Tokens are equal in strength save for special starred armies representing the dreaded Imperial Sardaukar and the Fremen Feydakin death commandoes, which count double for combat purposes.

The game's components are rounded out by two decks of cards. The spice deck is used to determine where and how much spice appears on the board. Each card shows an area of the map and the amount of spice (numbered counters) to be placed there. Special Shai-hulud (worms) denote unique circumstance when turned over. The other deck is comprised of treachery cards, probably one of the most entertaining parts of the game. Herbert's novel was filled with intrigue and these cards provide much of that flavor for the game. Some represent weapons and defenses, others are special cards like truthtrances, extra moves and the like. A few are worthless.

Preparation for the game is relatively quick. Players select what factions they are going to play and consult their shields for their initial forces and where they set up on the map (if at all), as well as their beginning amount of spice. Each player also receives a beginning treachery card. Then the leaders of all the participating players are mixed together and four are dealt to each. From these, a player may choose one traitor from among the opposing leaders. If that leader is subsequently played against him in combat, he may reveal the fact that leader is a traitor and win an instant and complete victory. By way of elimination, players will know that any leaders of their own dealt to them are safe from being traitorous. Traitors are marked on a sheet

from the information pad, which is also used to keep track of certain game functions like turns and special abilities of certain groups. It also provides more special advantages for certain characters and explains the uses of individual treachery cards.

Once preparation is complete the regular turn sequence begins. Each turn consists of six, mutually participatory phases. This keeps everyone involved throughout the turn sequence, maintaining a high level of interest for all the players. Turns move quickly, and though the game is to last for fifteen turns, provided no one wins before hand, I haven't played in a game that lasted that long. Games lengthen in both time and turns in proportion to the number of players participating, though an hour seems to be an average playing time.

The first phase in the turn sequence is the Storm Round. The storm piece, a large crescent shaped marker is manuevered from two to six hexes, as determined by two of the players each choosing a number from one to three. If the Fremen is playing, that character handles storm movement through a somewhat altered means. The storm wipes out armies or spice tokens in any desert areas in any of the sectors it passes through. The Spice Blow then follows. A spice card is turned over and the appropriate amount of spice placed in that area. Herbert was very clear in establishing the importance of Dune's only export, the geriatric, vision-inducing melange---spice. The value of spice is incredible. As the game's introduction points out, spice is "the universal currency, the measure of all value". This round then, is key, for only by obtaining spice can players pay for treachery cards, troops, the revivication of fallen leaders, and transport onto the planet from their off world reserves. Spice collection is done during the last phase of the game after all combat. Players may collect two spice per army in the area, three if they own Carthag or Arrakeen (presumbably due to the availability of desert roving spice factories). Six cards in the spice deck picture worms, the "Shai-hulud" and mark special nexus points. Nexus points are the only time players may make or break alliances, and thus gain the special advantages their ally can give under the alliance portion of their shield. Worms also destroy any remaining spice or troops in last area spice appeared. Fremen are exampt from the catastrophe and further, may use any additional Shai-hulud cards in that phase to make an unlimited move for one group of army tokens (worm ride).

Spice blow is followed by the bid for treachery cards. These are dealt face down, one per each player participating, and the bidding begins, with the player who will move first (as determined by the proximity of the storm marker to their seat around the table). Only the Atriedes character may look at the card before bidding. The card goes to the highest bidder and the spice tokens paid go to the Emperor (if in play) or the spice bank. Each player may only hold four treachery cards at one time, save for the Harkonnen, who may hold eight and also get one free card from the deck for every one they buy, making them a formidable, and treacherous, opponent indeed.

Movement follows with the first player making his moves and then each player in turn, to his right. There are two types of movement: off planet to Dune, and area to area. A player may make one of each type in his turn. Off planet movement onto the board must be paid for in spice (to the Guild player if in the game) at a rate of one spice per token landed in a stronghold and two per token landed elsewhere. On planet movement is from area to area, usually only one, though the Fremen can move two spaces and anyone owning Arrakeen or Carthag can move three due to ornithopters. Players can generally only move one group by each means per turn.

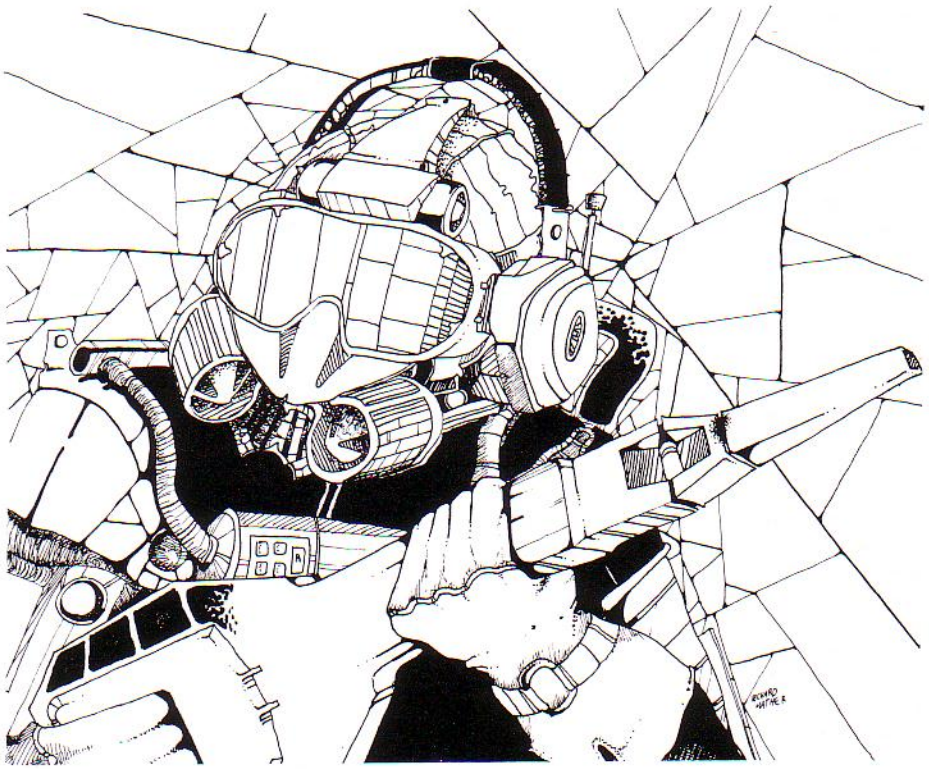
After movement, there comes the inevitable combat. Strongholds are most often the site of battles, since control of three of the five on the board results in victory. On some occasions, players may venture out into the desert to battle each other over rich spice blows. Battles are conducted to the same order as movement, the first player initiating all combats he wishes and then the player to his right following suit. Each participant must compose a battle plan using a combat wheel. The wheel is a two piece affair on which the players may dial the number of tokens they wish to use in the battle, and cut out space to fit in their leader. A side's battle plan is composed of 1) a number of tokens (up to the number in the area), 2) a leader, 3) a defense card and 4) a weapon card. Certain powers available to some characters can affect this makeup, such as the Bene Gesserrit power of voicing a player to choose a certain card, or the Atriedes power of seeing one element beforehand. Once composed, the two battleplans are revealed and compared. Any weapons not countered by the proper defense kill the opposing leader and any traitors played are declared. The outcome of the battle is determined by adding the value of any remaining leaders to the number of tokens dialed on the wheel. Highest total (draws go to the attacker) wins. The loser removes all tokens, but not leaders; they can only be killed by treachery cards or being traitorous. The winner loses the number of tokens dialed; remaining tokens, if any, retain possession of the area. The battle sequence is clever, and a lot of fun as players attempt to psyche each other out concerning treachery cards and tokens dialed. Dead units and leaders are sent to the Bene Tleilaxu tanks and can be brought through revivication during the movement round. Each player gets a certain number of free revivals per turn; additional tokens can be brought back for two spice each. Revival of leaders requires payment equal to their combat value.

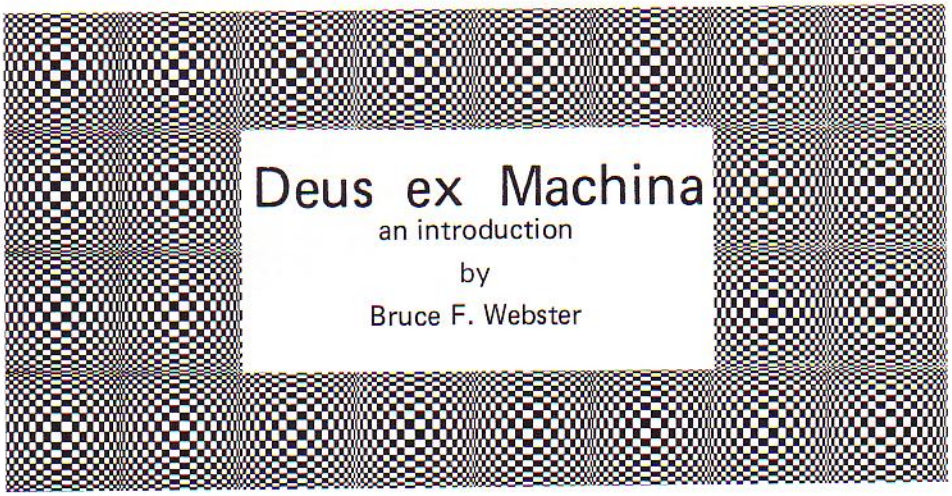
As mentioned previously, spice collection follows the combat.

DUNE is won by one player holding three strongholds at the end of any turn. Some players can also win by preventing anyone from achieving victory for fifteen turns. These characters, the Fremen and Guild, profit from this state of non-control, though they can also attempt a win by the occupation of strongholds.

I liked this game quite a bit, as has everyone I've played it with (about eight people). It's colorful and exciting. Each faction is different, possessing varying powers and abilities which lead to broad array of strategies, especially when one considers how the various sides intermesh in play. Not only is DUNE a good game, it does an amazingly accurate job of conveying the feel and air of *Dune* the novel. I suspect this game will become very popular, as it is fast, easy and fun. It is also excellently suited for tournament play.

DUNE is available from the Avalon Hill Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21214 for $15.00 plus $1.00 postage.





Deus ex Machina

an introduction

by

Bruce F. Webster

In 1950, less than five years after the first public demonstration of a digital computer, Claude Shannon published a paper describing how a computer might be programmed to play chess. Computers and games have been linked ever since. From Los Alamos' chess-playing MANIAC and MIT's legendary Space War to Northwestern's historic CHESS 4.7 and the omnipresent Star Trek and Lunar Lander programs, people have been literally *playing with computers.* For years, though, computer costs limited the accessibility of most systems and the complexity of most games. You usually had to be content with a simple game of hangman or wumpus played between programming assignments. This was fun for a while, but it usually led to frustrating day-dreams of "If only I had this thing in my basement!"

Well, thanks to the ongoing semiconductor technology revolution, you *can* have a computer in your basement (or bedroom or study), and it will cost you less than a video tape recorder or a quality stereo system. What's more, you needn't feel pressured to run out and buy a system before prices go up; even with double-digit inflation, prices continue to drop. As it is, current costs of most home computer systems are based not on manufacturing, but on what the market will bear. And even if you can't afford your own system, chances are you can find someone who can -- a friend, a relative, your school, et cetera.

There are, however, some thorns in this apparent paradise. The nastiest is this: what do you do with the computer once you get your hands on it? Computer programming is not yet taught as an elective at most high schools, so most people have no idea as to how to write a program. Fortunately, the exploding home computer has generated many well-written texts on beginning programming--just check your bookstore or a current issue of BYTE or CREATIVE COMPUTING. Unfortunately, they don't always help you when you're trying to implement a particular program with particular problems--such as the hex map in OGRE.

This is where we come back to gaming (thought I'd fogotten?) and the avowed purpose of this column: to help gamers to design, implement, debug and use game-related programs. More specifically, there are three basic functions for this column: first, to suggest, discuss, and critique ideas for the use of computers in gaming; second, to show specific techniques in writing programs for games; and third, to promote information exchange in the form of actual program listings and reader comments and questions. Most of all, it should help you who are programming to avoid "re-inventing the wheel," i.e., to avoid wasting time on a problem that someone else has already solved and to spend more time on new ideas and problems.

I would like to define the scope of this column now to avoid questions and arguments later. My definition of "computer" stretches from the programmable calculators (HP 67, TI 59) to monster machines such as the CDC Star 100 or the CRAY-1, so I consider them all fair game. Most of our discussion, though, will naturally fall at the lower end of the scale -- home computers and programmable calculators -- since they represent the level of most people's access to computers. As for games, the subject matter will center around (though not necessarily be limited to) science fiction and fantasy gaming. This is not as restrictive as it might sound, since most of the techniques and ideas discussed will be applicable to *all* games--it is mostly a measure to forestall the usual barrage of angry letters that appear whenever Metagaming suggests something new. Furthermore, I would like to avoid the standard "UFO" and "Star Trek" games -- these are better dealt with in the regular home computer magazines. What I *do* want to see are computer aids to and implementations of existing SF/F games or (better yet) new games requiring the same amount of skill and intelligence (or more).

The format of this column (Editor willing) will consist of four sections. The first will be an article with ideas and commentary, designed to provoke thought, programs, and more ideas. Second will be a "how-to" article giving specific information and techniques for writing gaming programs. Third will be actual program listings (if space permits) or a description of an actual program with information as to how you can get a copy of it. Finally, if response warrants it, there will be a forum, an extension of the letters column, for both comments (for all to read) and questions (which, if possible, I will answer). This format, of course, is not engraved in stone, so it can and will be changed to meet changing needs.

Where, you may ask, is all of this going to come from? For starters, it's going to come from me. "Me" is Bruce Webster, a computer scientist by profession, and an avid gamer. I have a BS in computer science and am currently employed as a systems engineer by Singer-Link to work on the space shuttle mission simulators at the Johnson Space Center. I own about 30 games, mostly science fiction/fantasy. I am also keenly interested in personal computing and should own my own system by the time this is published. But I am *not* the fountain of all knowledge, and this column will suffer if I am its only contributor. So, Ben and the others here at TSG are counting on lots of input from you in the form of letters, programs, and articles. With your participation, this column can be a success.

Computers and Gaming: Three Approaches

As part of this first column, I would like to present three ways of looking at the role of computers in gaming. The ideas come from my readings in artificial intelligence and the philosophy of computer science as well as my own thought in designing gaming programs. These concepts are by no means mutually exclusive; indeed, each one contains something of the other two. To name them, I borrowed a common Latin phrase, gave it a new meaning, and then, generated two other parallel phrases. You will also notice the corresponding English phrase is not a direct translation--this is not because I speak Latin poorly (which I do, but that's beside the point), but because I wanted to further define the concepts.

Homo ex machina, or the computer as companion. This is a basic concept in artificial intelligence and has been the motivation behind most standard computer games, especially chess. It refers to setting up the computer to act as another human being, primarily as an opponent in some game, and thus, holding up a mirror to help us to see ourselves better. It can also provide us with a tireless and consistent opponent. The epitome of this concept currently is the BORIS chess machine, a microcomputer you can buy for about $200, which not only plays a fairly decent game of chess, but also makes comments as it does so.

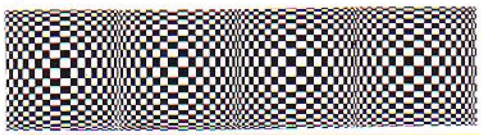
Espiritu ex machina, or the computer as familiar. One thing which computers do very well is store and keep track of large amounts of information. One thing which gamesmasters in role-playing games have to struggle with is storing and keeping track of large amounts of information. Thus we have the concept of the computer acting as a 'familiar' to the gamesmaster (*"Familiar spirit:* a demon supposed to be in association with or under the power of a man." Oxford English Dictionary). Using a computer in a role-playing game could give the gamesmaster greater freedom for creativity by freeing him (or her) from the various tasks which take so much time and attention. It could also help to ease the realism/playability bind by allowing greater detail without consuming more time and effort. I intend to devote an entire future column to

this concept and some of my ideas on the subject.

Deus ex machina, or the computer as universe. In his now-classic book Computer Lib/Dream Machine, Ted Nelson makes the point that you can define your own universe within a computer by setting up the rules and letting things run. You can do the same thing with paper and pencil--indeed, that is just what all of us who play simulation games are doing--but a computer can often do it better and, when a lot of detail is involved, more consistently. As computers become more powerful and expensive, they will also become the logical medium for playing simulation games for that very reason--they can take care of the details and give us more time to think.

This brings up an important question: why are simulation games so fascinating for those who become involved in them? I believe there are a number of answers to this question. One is suggested by Stewart Brand, author of the Whole Earth Catalog and editor of CoEvolutionary Quarterly, in his book Two Cybernetic Frontiers. In it, he recounts his observations of students playing SpaceWar at a university computer facility, concluding they are attracted by the opportunity to enter a simluated life-and-death struggle where survival is based on their own skill and nothing else. Another, more mundane answer is simply the release in tension and frustration they can bring by allowing us to concentrate on something outside of our own normal concerns. Finally, it allows us to confront our own fears of inadequacy by placing us in extraordinary circumstances and allowing us to rise to the occasion, helping us to increase our feeling of self-worth.

As I said, the computer can bring us more and more realism in our simulations, which in turn leads to the scenario for many science fiction stories: what happens when the simulation becomes more attractive than reality? It becomes an individual choice of how one wants to face life. The situation can be likened to one's use of a large, deep pond. You can drink from it, play in it, and bathe in it--or you can drown in it. But whatever you choose, the pond, with both its promise and dangers, will not go away. . .and neither will the computer.



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The Charles Robert's Awards have suffered from many defects during their four years. They are the best-known awards, but that doesn't make them immune from criticism. Last year, more than half of the active firms in our hobby had no products nominated. *THE SPACE GAMER* couldn't get nominated even though it had won an award the previous year. *Fire & Movement* won best professional magazine, and was also one of the entities handling the nominations.

Our view is if that's the way the game is played then why should Metagaming stand back and wait for fan awards which are truly equitable? It makes just as much sense to promote and bally-boo what we feel are legitimate contenders for the awards and do everything in our power to see they get nominated and win.

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Best Fantasy/SF Series: Fantasy Trip Microtures

Best Vehicular Model Series: Ogre Microtures

Best Miniatures Rules: _____

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Best Role Playing Adventure: (Dungeons, Campaign Modules, Scenarios, etc.) Death Test

Best Professional Magazine covering Miniatures: _____

Best Professional Magazine covering Role Playing: The Space Gamer

All Time Best 20th Century Naval Rules: _____

All Time Best Ancient or Medieval Land Rules: _____

THE CHARLES ROBERTS AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN BOARDGAMING

Best Pre-20th Century Boardgame: Sticks & Stones

Best 20th Century Boardgame: Invasion of the Air-Eaters

Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Boardgame: Stellar Conquest (revised)

Best Initial Release of a Boardgame: (This refers to the first release by a new company.) Zulu: Naka

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(Amateur magazines being defined as non-profit efforts not of professional quality which do not provide income for their staff nor pay for contributions.)

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Best Fantasy/SF Series: _____

Best Vehicular Model Series: _____

Best Miniatures Rules: _____

Best Role Playing Rules: _____

Best Role Playing Adventure: (Dungeons, Campaign Modules, Scenarios, etc.) _____

Best Professional Magazine covering Miniatures: _____

Best Professional Magazine covering Role Playing: _____

All Time Best 20th Century Naval Rules: _____

All Time Best Ancient or Medieval Land Rules: _____

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Best Pre-20th Century Boardgame: _____

Best 20th Century Boardgame: _____

Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Boardgame: _____

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(Amateur magazines being defined as non-profit efforts not of professional quality which do not provide income for their staff nor pay for contributions.)

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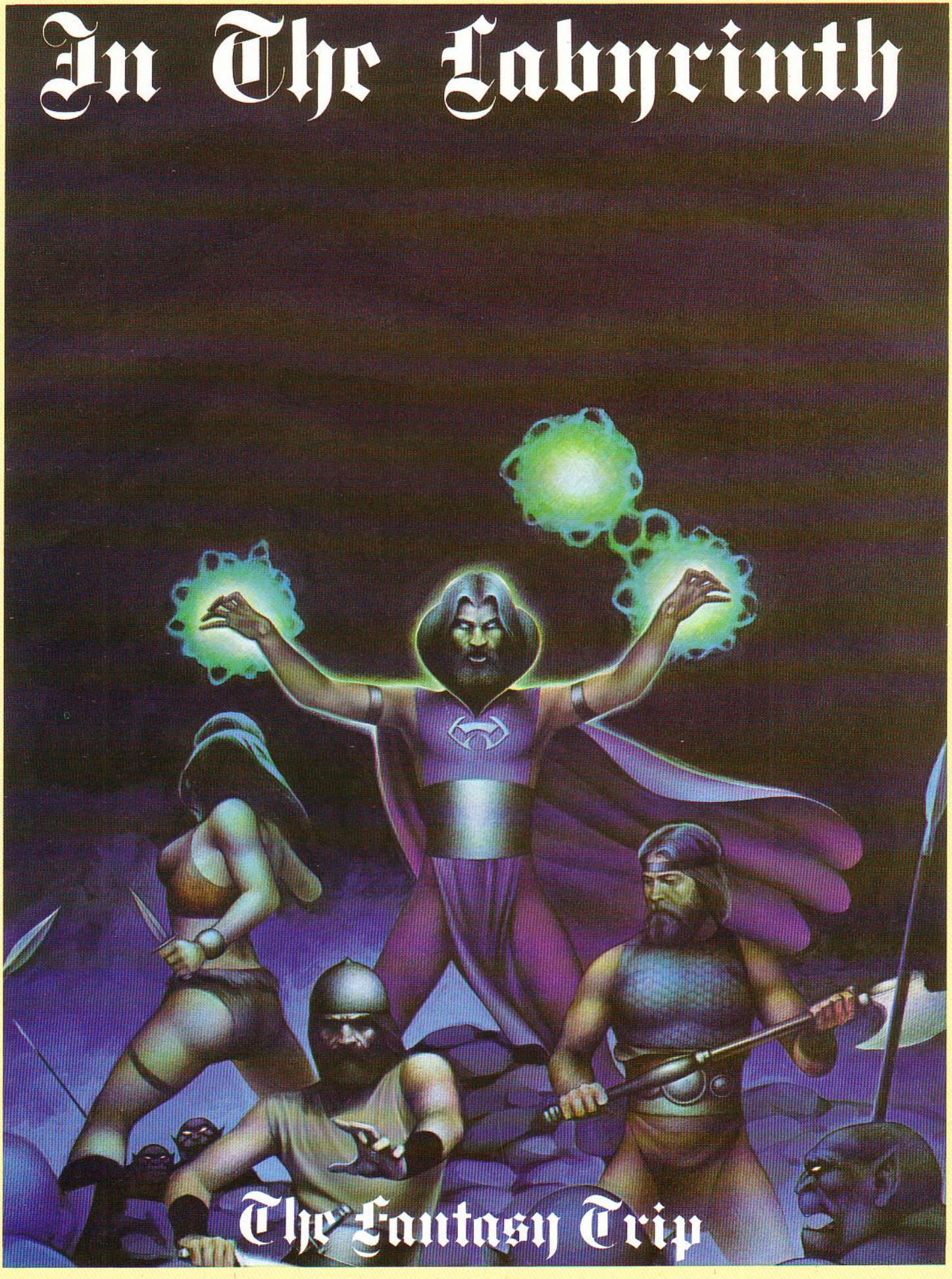

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THE FANTASY TRIP is a game system in which players act out in play the character role of their alter-egos. With a Game Master's guidance, players encounter monsters, riches, danger, romance, magic, quests, demons and mystery - all the excitement life should be. Characters develop their own lives in a series of adventures often covering months of play. THE FANTASY TRIP explains play in easy progression through a set of integrated rule modules. New enhancements to the system, published every few months, will keep it exciting for years.

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THE FANTASY TRIP achieves the crux of role-playing games better than any previous system. The test of a fantasy role-playing game is its ability to free your imagination. THE FANTASY TRIP frees imagination through rules structured on clearly defined and logically related concepts. The rules are a positive aid to players, a welcome change for previously frustrated gamers. Since Metagaming couldn't have the first role-playing game, we made the THE FANTASY TRIP the BEST way to meet your alter-ego.

The Fantasy Trip

In The Labyrinth

IN THE LABYRINTH is the initial Game Master's module of Metagaming's THE FANTASY TRIP role-playing game system. Everything necessary to create a fantasy world and guide players on adventures is included in IN THE LABYRINTH. Metagaming brings you the new standard in fantasy role-playing games, the next generation in the evolution of the genre.

As Game Master you act as guide and moderator for a group of adventurous gamers. You create a fantastic world of Wizards, Dragons, Heroes, Dwarves, Elves, Heroines, surprises, magic, treasure and danger. As their characters adventure players direct them through a series of encounters. An encounter may be dialogue among players or a detailed combat with monsters played out on scale labyrinth maps. The adventure develops through real-time decisions and actions in response to character experiences. Play is imaginative, open-ended, fast and fun - the ultimate fantasy.

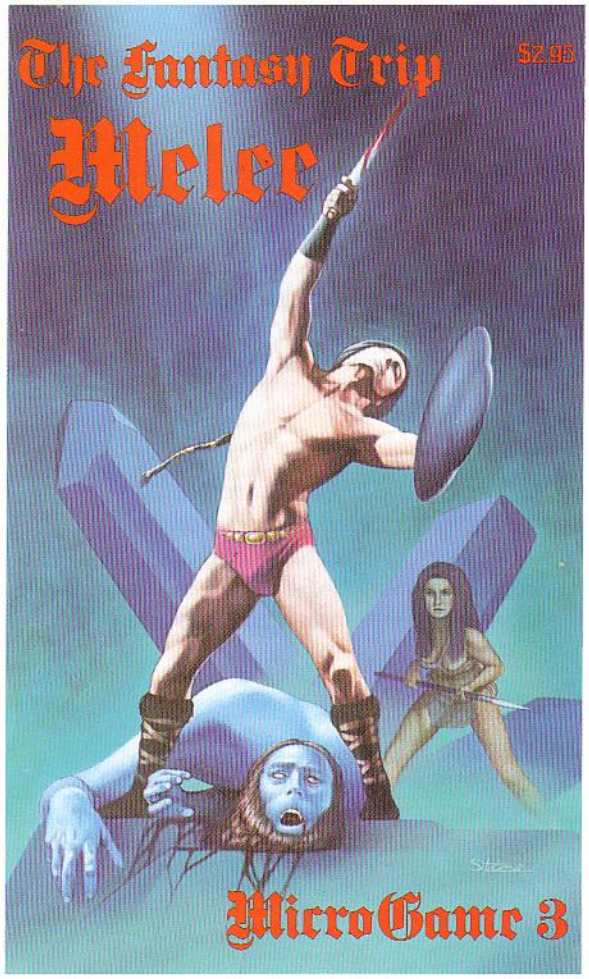
Players of IN THE LABYRINTH create their own characters starting with the three basic attributes of Strength, Dexterity and IQ. Characters initially choose to be a physically skilled Hero or a magically skilled Wizard. Through selection of Hero Talents or Wizard spells a player defines his character's individual competences. A character may opt to be a skilled killer, scientist, rogue, cleric, mechanic, merchant, alchemist, bard or whatever profession a player concocts. A Wizard pursues his calling with magical spells and a Hero, through physical Talents.

You're ready for adventure once your character is created and his equipment and weaponry purchased. You'll soon find yourself reacting as you perceive your alter-ego character would. Heroes tend to save the threatened. The sneaky tend to get wealthy and make enemies. The loyal survive longer, if more modestly, in tight knit groups. The friendly get help when they need it. Flaky characters are the joy and despair of all. The brave are long remembered.

IN THE LABYRINTH contains a 144 page rules booklet, four full-color labyrinth map sheets, 480 die cut counters plus monster counter sheet, tunnel megahexes, Game Master's reference shield, map blanks, map note sheets, character record sheets and three dice.

Suggested retail $19.95

Code ITL 1-1-003



MELEE: *The man-to-man combat module from THE FANTASY TRIP. Players create their fighters and select their archaic weaponry. Then, they must survive slashing arena duels. Winners become more skilled, losers die.*

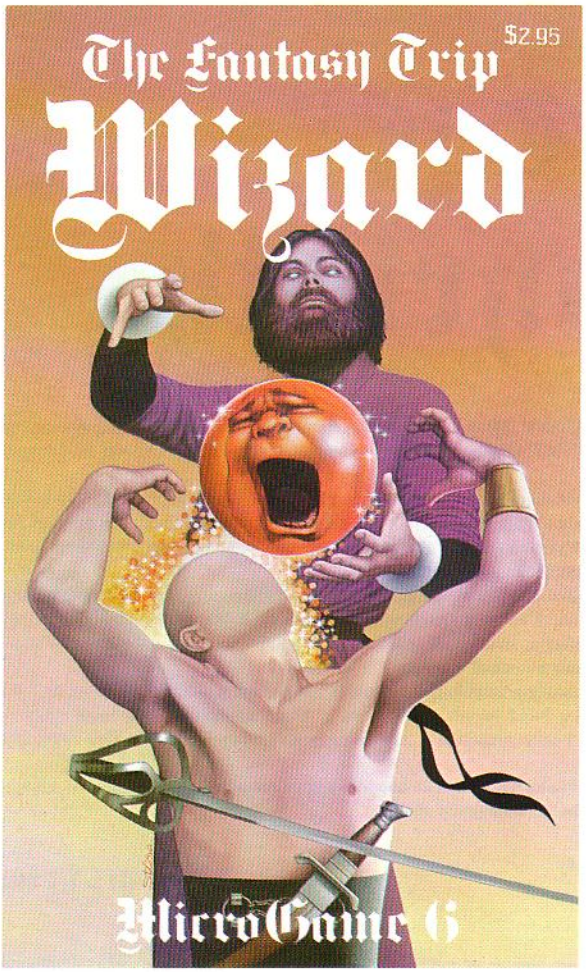
Code MLE 3-1-003

WIZARD: *The magical combat module from THE FANTASY TRIP. Create your own wizard, select his repetoire of magic tricks and turn him loose in the arena. Wizard is fully compatible with Melee and adds the exciting dimension of magic to arena combat.*

Code WIZ 3-1-006

DEATH TEST: *This Microquest is a programmed adventure from* The Fantasy Trip. *It is not a complete game and requires the MicroGame,* **MELEE** *for play. It is excellent for solo adventurers. And watch for* **DEATH TEST 2** *soon! It will be bigger, better, and* a real killer.

Code DET 3-2-001



STELLAR CONQUEST

THE CLASSIC GAME OF SOCIETIES IN CONFLICT

Metagaming

STELLAR CONQUEST is the classic game of space cultures in conflict. You lead a complete interstellar society. Stars are explored, colonies founded, technologies are discovered, war fleets built and battles fought. The fun and challenge are all yours.

STELLAR CONQUEST can be played by two to four gamers. Each player leads his own interstellar society in a years long struggle for survival and dominance. While STELLAR CONQUEST is of only moderate learning difficulty, play interactions can become complex. Winners tend to be balanced strategists who act decisively under pressure.

Nominated for the Charles Roberts Award - - - the sine qua non of gaming.

"The strength of the game is in its sophisticated method of simulating technological development. . .tense and absorbing. . ." Nicky Palmer in GAMES & PUZZLES

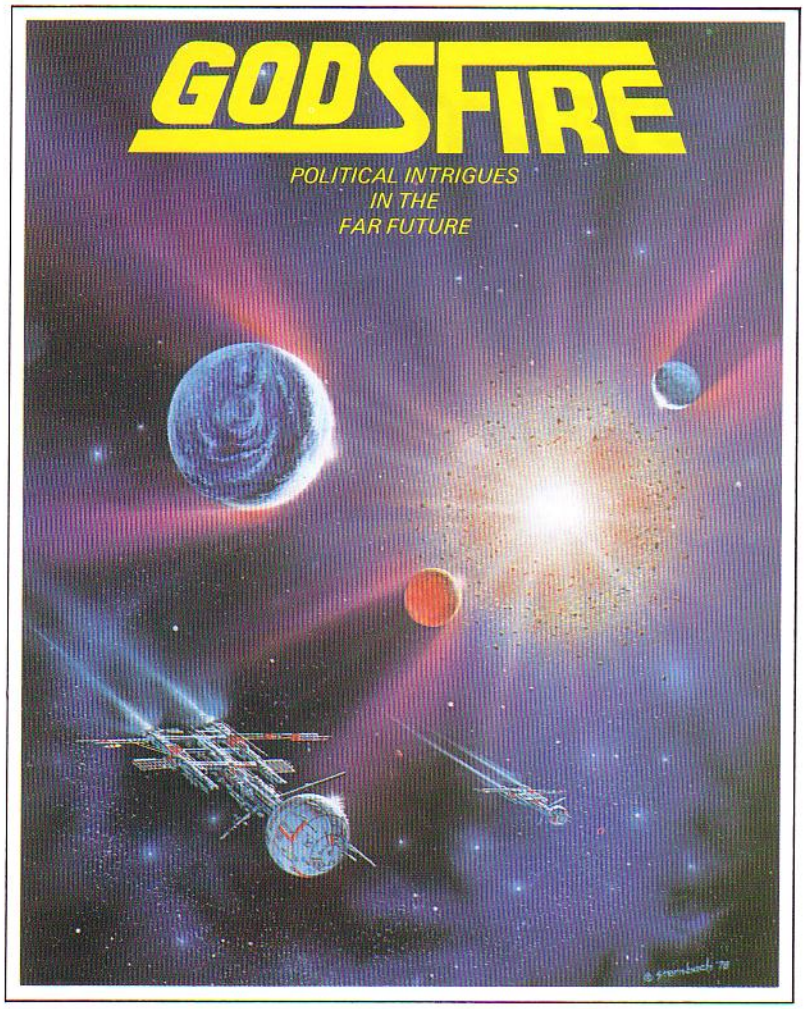
Richard Berg of MOVES magazine included STELLAR CONQUEST in his list of "ten games every wargamer should own".

Rated 7.8 in overall quality on a scale of 9.0 by readers of THE SPACE GAMER

Components include a 17" by 22" six color map representing 54 star systems, 480 die-cut space ship counters, rules booklet, four summary data reference sheets, 78 star cards for planetary system data, two dice and eight player record sheets for colony data.

Game design by Howard Thompson. Cover art by Kelly Freas.

Code 1-1-001



When it first appeared, GODSFIRE was hailed as the best political/economic SF game ever designed. Now in a new boxed edition -- complete with beautiful full-color cover by Rick Sternbach and enough components for 8 players -- GODSFIRE is a "must" for the skilled gamer.

GODSFIRE is two games in one. The basic version is a battle game, with space fleets and ground forces fighting for control of fifteen planets. A unique movement system makes true three-dimensional movement easy.

The advanced game adds diplomacy, subversion, politics -- and the chance of Armageddon. Before you go to war, you'll have to gain support from internal political and economic interests (by fair treatment, negotiation, bribery, or force) -- or face revolution.

Components include two giant 22" by 34" strategic maps, 15 System Sheets and 8 National Government Sheets; 960 unit counters; 616 Gigabuck counters; and the rule booklet.

Playing time ranges from two hours to all day, depending on the scenario (from 2 to 15 players) that you choose.

Code GDF 1-1-002

FROM THE PUBLISHER

SCIENCE FICTION IN ACTION

Metagaming IS science fiction in action. We put science fiction creativity into game action. Our games are for those who saw Star Wars, Close Encounters, or Star Trek or who like to read Frank Herbert, Anne McCaffrey or Larry Niven. Games are active science fiction.

WHAT IS METAGAMING?

We were the first firm to specialize in science fiction and fantasy games. We published the first magazine, THE SPACE GAMER. We brought you STELLAR CONQUEST in 1974 when the whole idea was still new. We introduced the innovation of Micro-Games, the standard in low priced fun games.

BUT WHAT HAVE YOU DONE LATELY?

Lately? THE FANTASY TRIP: IN THE LABYRINTH is now shipping and will be the 1980 gaming sensation. It represents over 20,000 hours of professional and volunteer time. It's everything we wanted it to be. No one will be disappointed.

THE FANTASY TRIP: IN THE LABYRINTH represents the next generation in the evolution of fantasy role-playing games. A new standard has been set for the 80s.

WHY BUY METAGAMING?

We give gamers a "good play". The criteria for each game we produce is fun playability. Metagaming publishes STIMULATING games, not simulations. Reality, complexity, detail, intellectual challenge and size are valuable only if they yield fun. Entertainment is our business. Remember that about Metagaming.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

We believe science fiction gaming is in its infancy. In the 80's there are more unique products and ideas coming than can be imagined. Our hobby won't become staid and mature. The enthusiastic younger designers and innovators will produce exciting concepts that continuously invigorate.

Metagaming will lead the way. We have in the past. After all, science fiction is imagination and dreams are the key to the future.

Good Gaming,

Howard Thompson

Howard Thompson
Publisher

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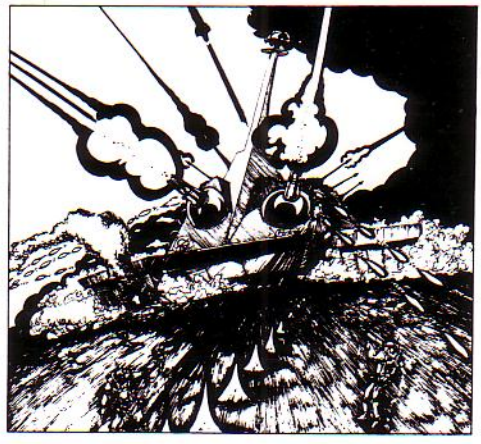

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No one interested in fantasy role-playing games, space games or the future should be without THE SPACE GAMER. With it you're fully part of a hobby, not just standing outside looking in. Without THE SPACE GAMER you miss that important feel for what's happening.

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OGRE: *The Ogre is a cybernetic tank armed with nuclear weapons - 30 meters of incredibly tough, inhumane intelligence. This quick-playing game pits ONE Ogre against a large force of "conventional" tanks, hovercraft, howitzers and infantry in the year 2085. It's an even match. . .*

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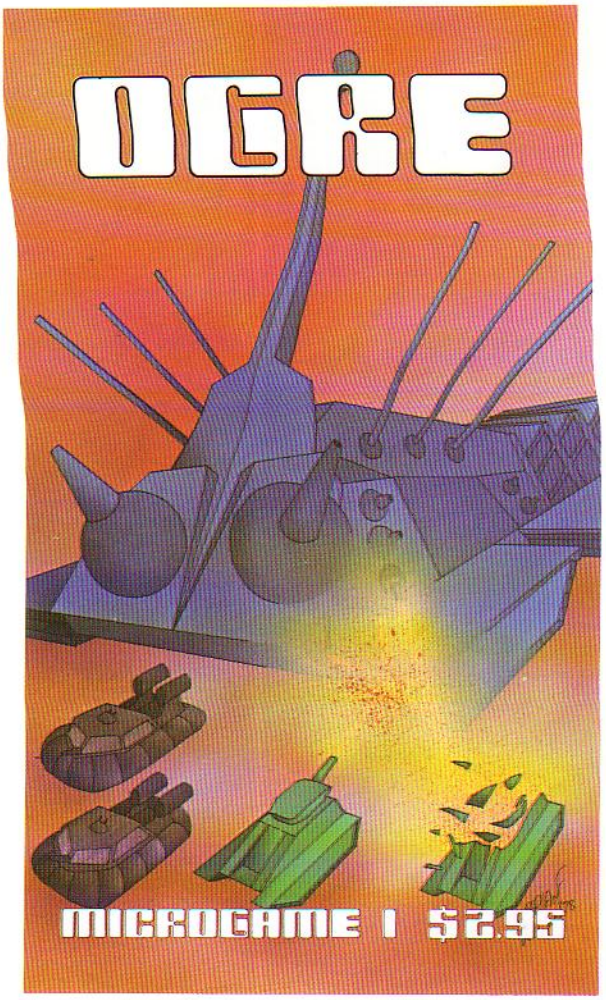

G.E.V.: *Speedy Ground Effect Vehicles, hovercraft, battle armor and infantry in a series of raids in 2085. This sequel to OGRE adds new terrain rules and units, even a train. You won't want to miss this intriguing supplement.*

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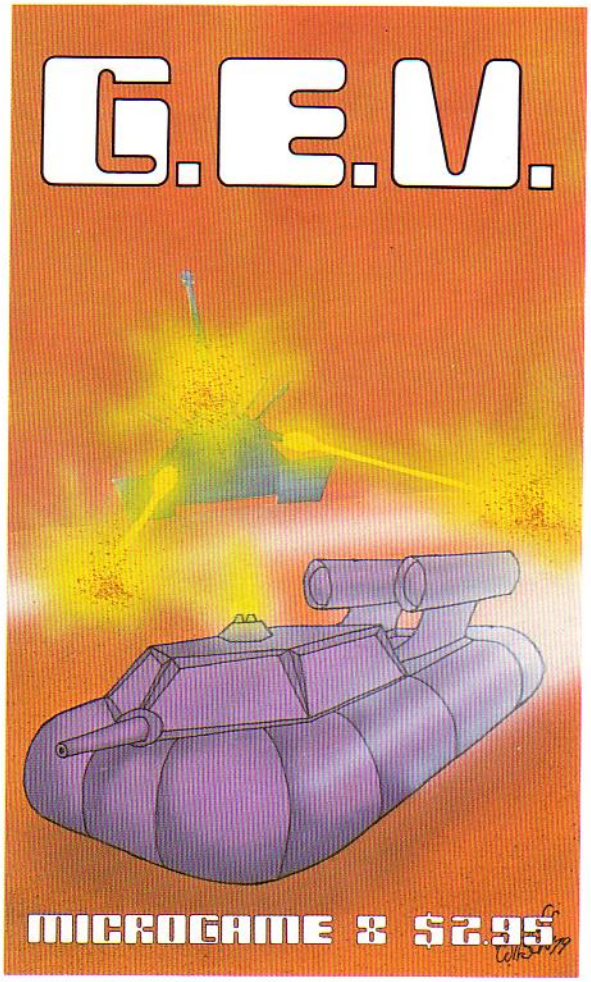

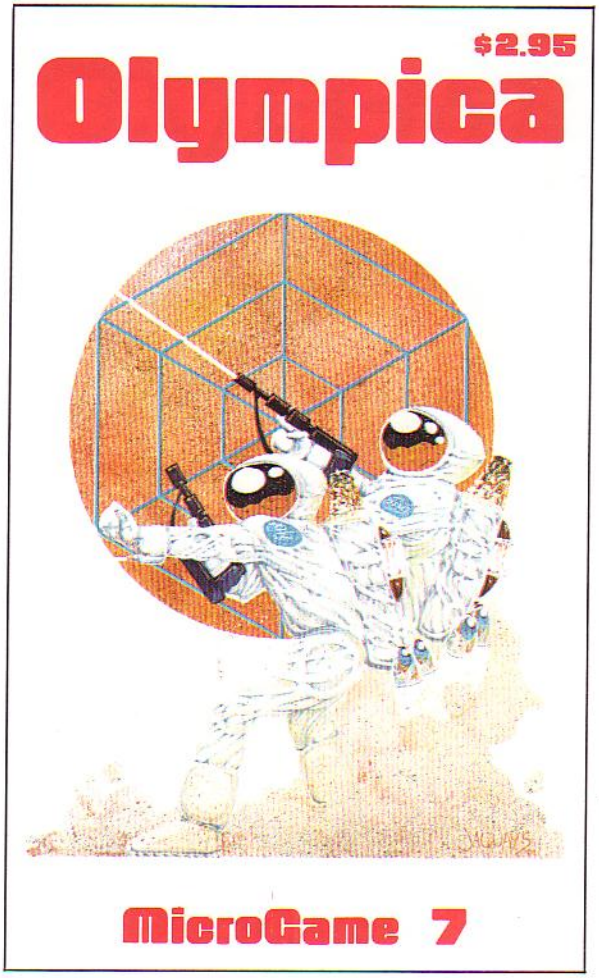

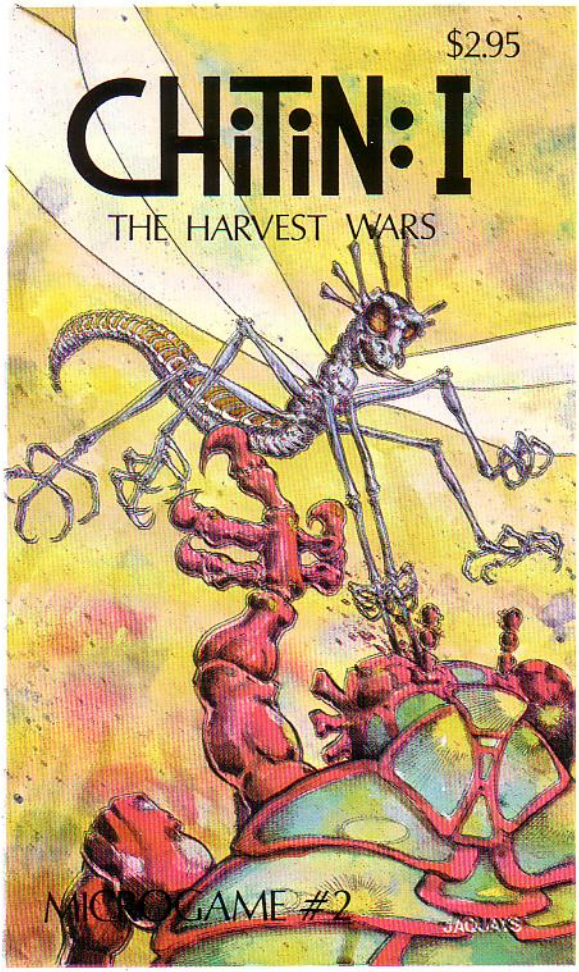

CHITIN I: *The intelligent insects of Chelan war for only one reason - FOOD. This tactical masterpiece pits varying forces of genetically-bred Hymenopteran warriors in a harvest bloodbath. Victory is counted in food and bodies collected for the hive.*

Code CTN 3-1-002

RIVETS: *The war is over, all are dead but no one told the robots. Two uncomprehending computer complexes continue producing simple-minded combatants as they slug it out. Their idiot creations need constant reprogramming to even recognize the foe.*

Code RIV 3-1-005

Warp War: *Players design their own ships in this game of interstellar maneuver and combat. Battles are resolved with a unique DICELESS combat system. Utilizing ship Beam, Screens, Missiles and power you must outguess your opponent to win.*

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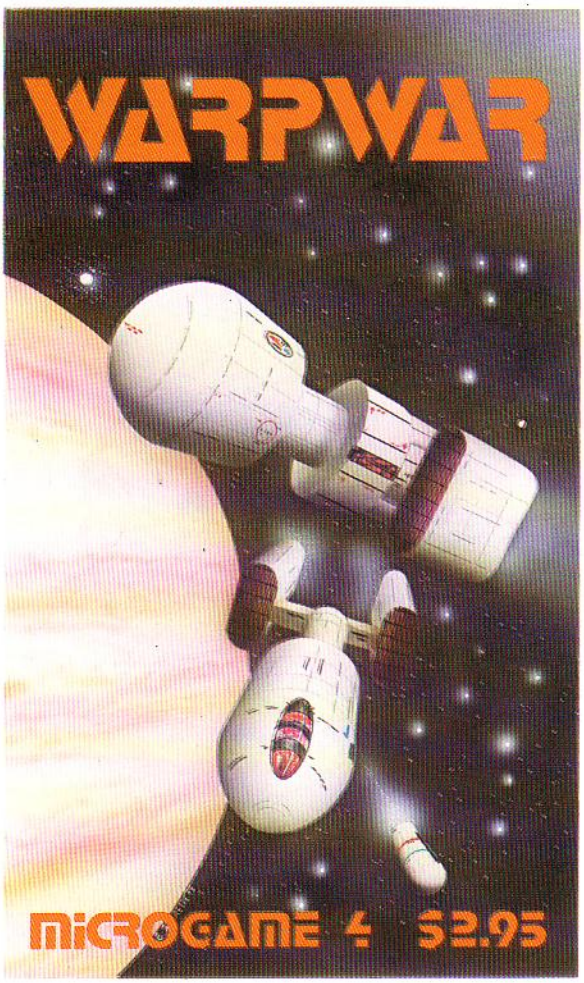
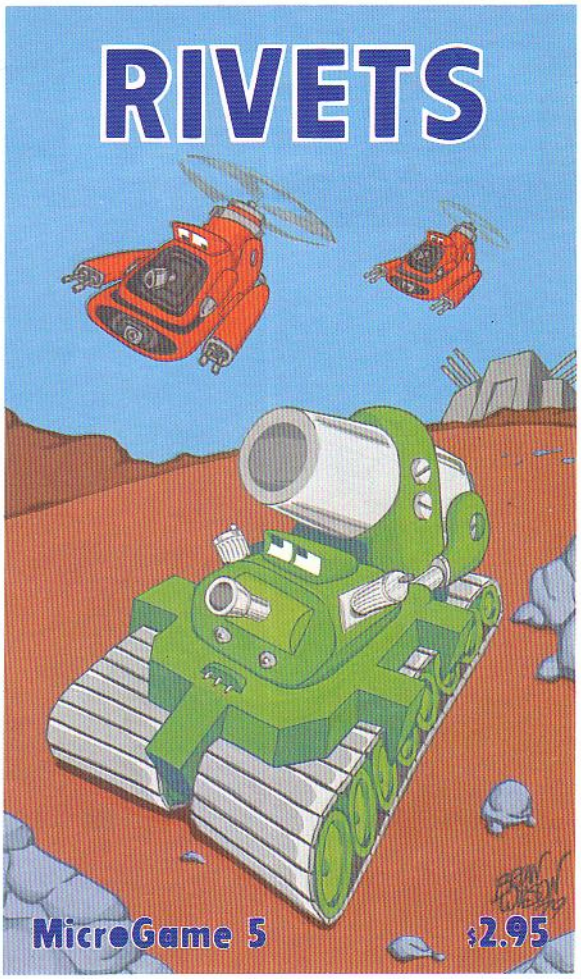




ICE WAR: *Oil and Russia, these will cause the next war. The ESA, European Socialist Alliance, must smash our Alaskan oilfields. Their snow trained raiders try to elude sophisticated U.S. satellite defenses in a hide-and-seek strike at Prudhoe Bay.*

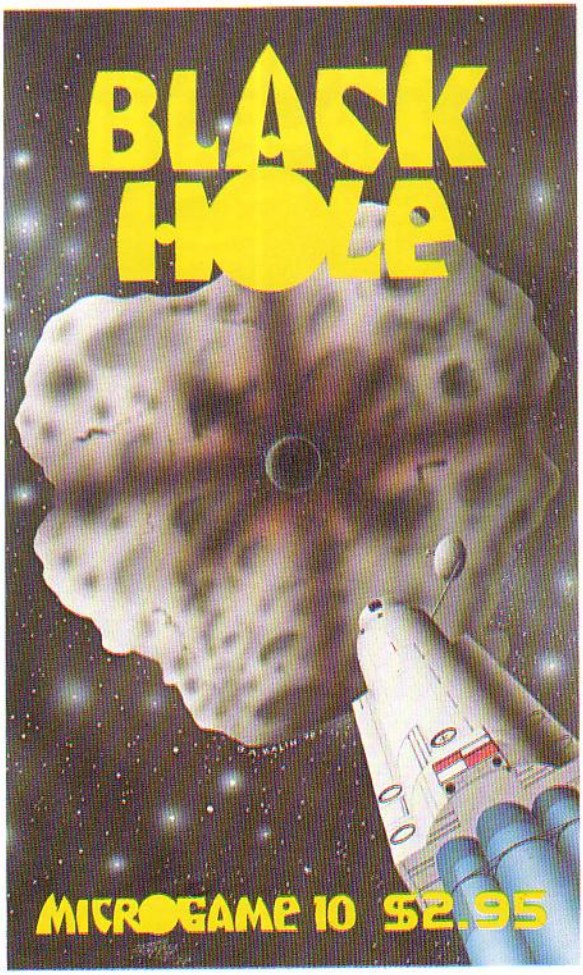
Code ICW 3-1-009

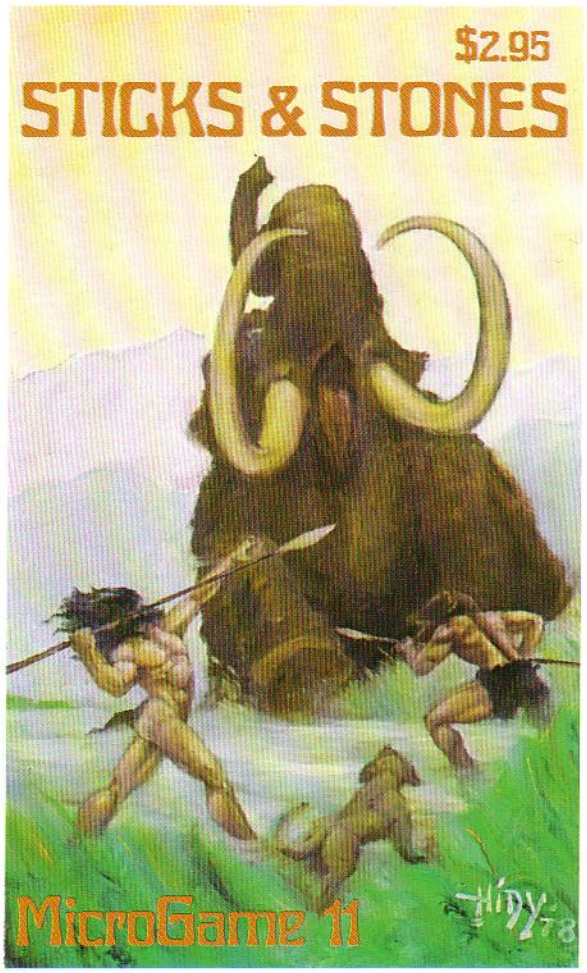
HOT SPOT: *The rebels are running, away and out of fuel. Chiros has the fuel factories but they float on "crustals" in a sea of molten lava. Can the rebels survive the heat and capture a crustal? Will help arrive in time? Will defenders melt rebel Ardor?*

Code HOT 3-1-015

BLACK HOLE: *A strange device of the OTHERS enters the solar system. The asteroid mining cartels know its control means dominance. But, what can this donut shaped asteroid with a black hole in the middle do?*

Code BHL 3-1-010





STICKS & STONES: *Survival in the Neolithic past was a harsh, brutal business. This game simulates the development of villages in raids, migrations, and Mastodon hunts. The primitives with spears, bows and axes and direct trained dogs. A remarkably realistic feel.*

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HOLY WAR: *Amtik the god has a universe within him. But, believer and unbeliever battle inside in a Holy War. 3D tactics and a variety of ship types make this one of the most challenging tactical space games ever produced.*

Code HLW 3-1-013

INVASION OF THE AIR EATERS: *Mankind is a mere nuisance to the aliens. They want to convert our air and take Terra. But, man fights back and learns the new technology to survive. This game covers production, landing, technology, and combat on a world map.*

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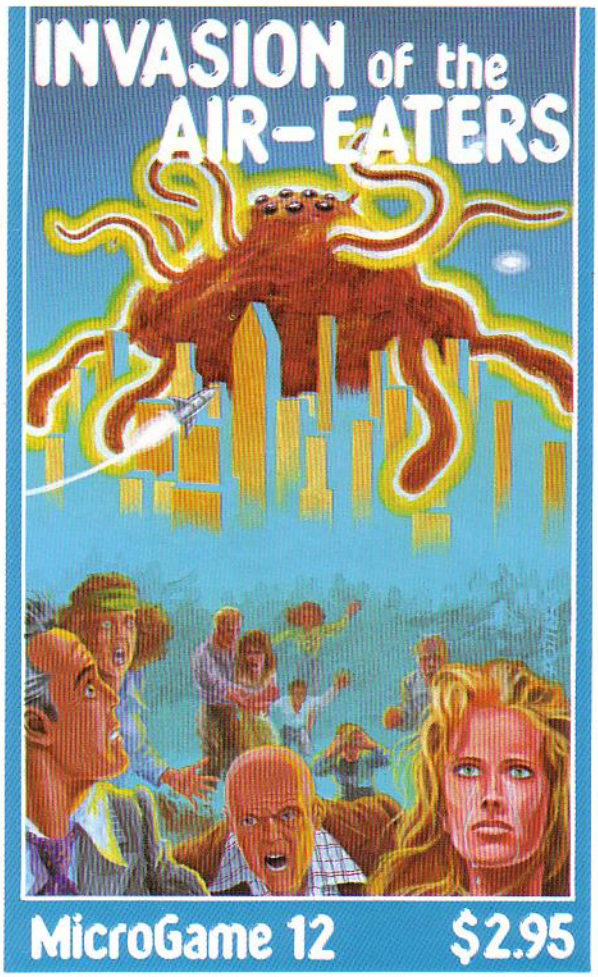
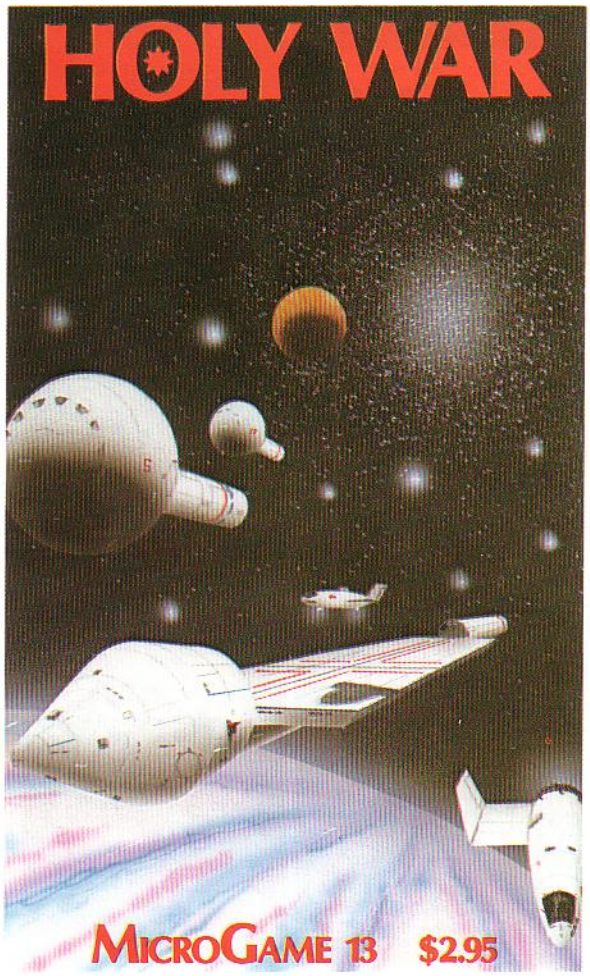




ONEWORLD/ANNIHILATOR: *Two games in one for the price of one! ONEWORLD is a humorous, easy to learn game of a battle between two gods for control of a planet. ANNIHILATOR pits the Space Marines against a computerized space fort - can they blow it?*

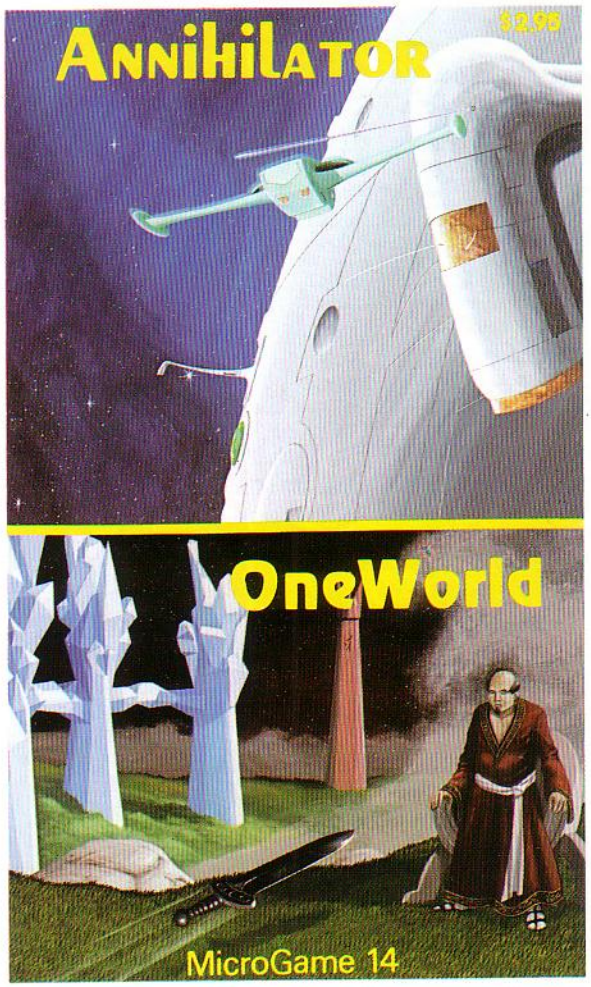
Code D01 3-1-014

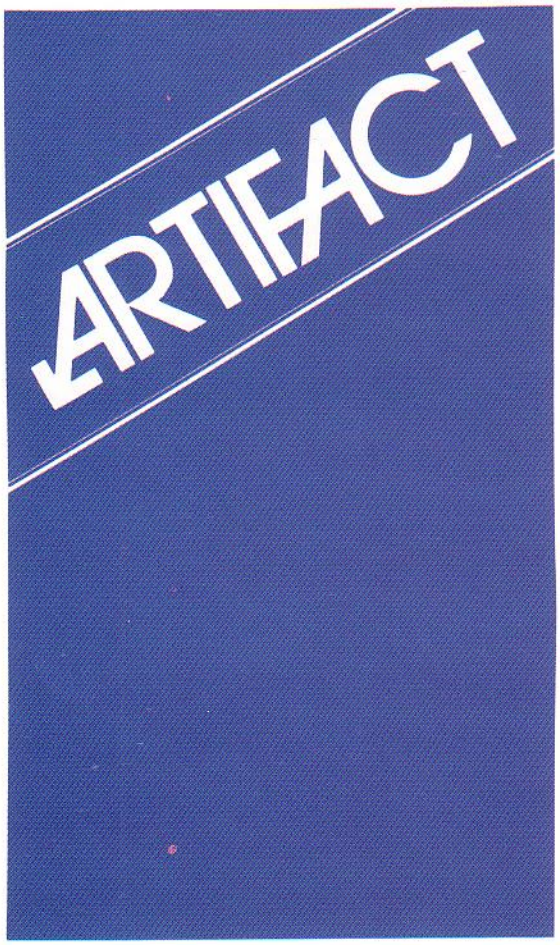
ARTIFACT: *Lunar expedition discovers "artifact". . .U.S. technicians attacked by moon commies. . .scientists confirm "artifact" is "alien". . .laser armed Rovers fight for control. . . details at 11:00.*

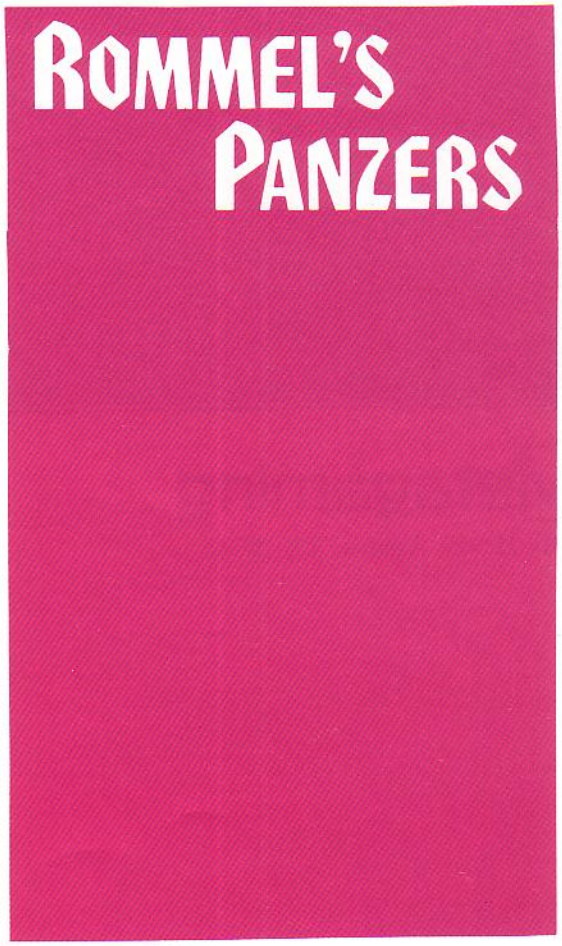
Code ART 3-1-016

ROMMEL'S PANZERS: *Blazing tanks battle it out in North Africa. Under a burning sun Panzers, Matildas, Crusaders, Stuarts, Grants and 88s are pitted in a slug-fest. The first Historical MicroGame.*

Code RPZ 3-3-001







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The Awful Green Things from Outer Space

a review

by Steve Jackson

This truly strange little game was designed and drawn by Tom Wham. I would like to shake his hand. Good job.

Its title neatly sums up THE AWFUL GREEN THINGS FROM OUTER SPACE. The intrepid travelers of the exploration ship *Znutar* (whose exploits are occasionally chronicled in Wham's comic strip in **The Dragon**) have made a severe error. A "pretty green rock" brought aboard the ship was actually an egg. It hatched into an Awful Green Thing. A *hungry* Awful Green Thing.

TAGTFOS is a perfect example of the MicroGame concept, even if someone else *did* publish it. It is short, easy to learn, and interesting enough that the players are likely to set up for another game when they finish the first one. It's easy to convince yourself that, if you just do things a little differently, you *can* win - *this* time.

Part of the charm of TAGTFOS is that it so accurately captures the spirit of the Late-Late-Show Alien Invasion. The kind of things that happen in the game translate all to easily into B-movie scenes. You know -

THE DISCOVERY. Two crewman round a bend in the corridor and confront - a THING. (Screams on the soundtrack - and from the audience, too.)

THE PITCHED BATTLE. The ship's sickbay is suddenly invaded by a crowd of groping, tentacled THINGS. Doc and the crewmen fight them off - bashing, punching, screaming. In the end a man lies dead, but the beasts are slain. But there are more lurking in the darkness somewhere. . .

THE FATAL MISTAKE. A technician is searching the lower decks, his stunner at the ready. Opening a door, he confronts - a Thing! Quickly he zaps it. To his utter dismay, it breaks into fragments. Then each fragment shimmers, flows, enlarges - and becomes a full-sized Thing. The hapless technician is overwhelmed by the rush of monsters. He has time for a single shriek - then he is engulfed. (This actually happened in one game - and I can *see* it on film. Whew.)

THE DARING ESCAPE. The ship is all but lost. With a few men, Captain Yid fights his way from the bridge. His battered warriors now know how to deal with the Green Things - but there are just too many! Reaching the saucer bay, they swarm aboard the *Znutar's* auxiliary craft, leaving their once-proud ship in alien hands. Years later, one of the boats reaches home to tell the story. (Oddly enough, every time the Green Things won in our games, the Captain really did get away.)

PLAY

Play is very simple; one side moves and attacks, then the other side reciprocates. The combat system is equally simple. Most of the interest of play comes from tactical movement about the gameboard (which represents the rooms and corridors of the great *Znutar*) and from two *very* nice rules.

The first of these is Monster Growth. There are four types of monsters - eggs, fragments, babies, and adults. Adults are slower than the crewmen, but stronger. Babies are slower yet, but still as strong as many crewmen. Eggs and fragments are immobile, though fragments can bite. The catch is that each turn the monsters grow. At the beginning of his turn, the monster player selects one of the four classes of Thing. Each memeber of that class is immediately replaced by a counter for the next-higher class. Eggs and Fragments become babies; babies become adults; adults remain adults *and* lay an egg. Any monster eating a crewman also gets a free "grow". The result is that a small group of monsters can multiply horrendously in a short time.

The second really nice rule involves the crew's weapons. Of course, the crew can try to beat the invaders to death bare-handed. Sometimes it even works. Generally, they're better off if they look for a weapon. There are many potential implements of destruction aboard, ranging from the conventional (stun pistols, gas grenades, and knives) to the absurd (pool cues and ration cans). The catch is, there's no telling what *any* weapon will do.

Since the Awful Green Things are such a totally unknown quality, no weapon effect can be known in advance. They may thrive on something that would kill a crewman - and vice versa. Therefore, the first time a weapon is used, the crew player picks a chit, determining that weapon's effect for the rest of the game. It may be great (5 dice to kill), mediocre (4 dice to stun or 3 to kill), totally useless, or absolutely disastrous. "GROW" is one disaster; it gives all monsters a free "grow" when fired at them. The real killer, though, is the "fragment" result. Any monster hit by a "fragment" weapon breaks into from 1 to 6 fragments. Since a fragment can grow into a baby in one turn, and an adult in two, even one bad "fragment" result can doom the crewfold. Weapons are therefore best tested with caution.

Another nice touch is the varying scope and range of the weapons - which IS known in advance. A knife, for instance, may be held or thrown, and affects only the creature you hit with it. A gas grenade affects everything (even crew) in the corridor or room where it's used. A stunner only affects one target - but it can be any target in the user's line-of-sight. And so on. The variation in weapon effects is the hardest rule to keep track of, but adds a lot of realism.

STRATEGY

Strategy for the Green Things is fairly simple. Spread thin to impede crew movement; pick off crewmen whenever you can. Make full use of your "growth" ability. The crew can't replace their losses; you become more numerous every turn. Just don't bunch up unless it's necessary; if the crew comes up with a good area weapon; you've had it.

The crew has it a little tougher. It's important to try every weapon you can--at least until you find some good ones. When you *do* get some good weapons, though, you may want to stop experimenting for fear of creating fragments. NEVER use an untried weapon on more than two aliens at once, unless all the FRAGMENT chits have been pulled and/or you're totally desperate. Swarms of weapon-induced fragments have ended many games. If you get a very good weapon, you may want to team its user(s) with the Robot. Green Things entering the Robot's area must ALL attack him, which will safeguard your weapon(s) as long as the Robot survives.

GAME BALANCE AND GLITCHES

I have the impression that the designer felt the crew to have an advantage. My own experience points to the opposite conclusion. Properly played, the Green Things seemed to win better than two out of three of the games I've played.

Some of this is certainly due to accident - the luck of the weapon-draw. Even so, that proves a point. *If* the crewmen can get a good area weapon, they can probably win. If they don't, they're in trouble. Any 5-dice-to-kill weapon is useful - but the difference between a deadly comm-beamer (affects any area in line-of-sight; affects all monsters in that area) and a deadly pool-cue (affects only one monster, must be used in same area as crewman wielding it) is immense. If the comm-beamer is effective, you should win. If the pool-cue is the best weapon - that's not so good. And sometimes the crew has no good weapons at *all*. When the luck of the draw is one of the biggest determinants of victory, you've got an unbalanced game.

Several small rule changes - mentioned later on - would give the crew some help. The best thing to do, I think, would be to start the Green Things out with a slightly smaller force. A well-played crew seems to have an even chance against a moderate number of aliens. The problem seems to be that set-up, as given, lets the Green Things increase in number a little too quickly most of the time.

There are also several small glitches to be cleared up. For instance:

It should be made clear whether the Green Things can eat the robot if they "kill" him. I have assumed they cannot.

It should also be made clear whether or not the robot can use weapons. I have assumed that he can.

"Line of sight" should be clearly defined. It *appears* that it does not extend through any hatches - except, possibly, a hatch adjacent to the crewman firing/throwing the weapon in question. . . and this is the rule I used.

Eggs, or stunned Green Things of any size, should *not* force a crewman to stop his movement for the turn. This change would not only seem more realistic, it would also help the crew. And they need the help.

The rule which automatically returns a dropped weapon to the Weapon Pool is unrealistic and works against the crew as often as for it. A dropped weapon ought to lie where it falls. The unlimited supply of Zgwortz, gas grenades, etc., in the appropriate storerooms is probably all right.

There should be a way to deactivate an Electric Fence by remote control. If the Fences turn out to create fragments, it is usually easy for the Things to isolate at least one of them long enough to run several Things into it- setting up a "monster farm" and ending the game very quickly.

Not a glitch, but a suggestion: TAGTFOS is still overlooking one hoary late-movie cliche. I would suggest this added rule:

ZNUTAR SELF-DESTRUCT

If at any time things are going badly for the crew, the Znutar's engines may be set to overload and destroy the ship. For a self-destruct to take place, either the Captain, First Officer, Engineering Officer, or a Pilot must be at one of the bridges for one crew turn, and may not be involved in combat that turn. The crew player should announce that he is initiating a self-destruct. At the end of the third turn following, the *Znutar* goes bye-bye. All Green Things are killed, along with any crewmen who have not taken to the boats and escaped. Thus, the crew has three full turns to run after the destruct order is implemented. Once implemented, destruct cannot be cancelled. A self-destruct scores 55 ½ points for the Awful Green Things; any escaped crewmen count normal victory points for the crew player.

* * *

THE AWFUL GREEN THINGS FROM OUTER SPACE is available from Tactical Studies Rules, Inc., as part of THE DRAGON No. 28; the back-issue price is $2.10. By itself, the game is well worth the price of the magazine. The components must be cut out and backed with cardboard. It's worth the trouble. As a matter of fact, TSR ought to consider putting TAGTFOS out in standard game form. It's better than a lot of what they're publishing now.

If you like slightly-wacky short games, find a copy of this one. You won't regret it.

Wizard's Quest

a review

by

Mark Brady

WIZARD'S QUEST is one of the new fantasy games released by Avalon Hill. It can be played by two to six players and takes one and a half to three hours to play.

The physical components of this game are up to Avalon Hill's usual high standards. It comes in the standard Bookcase game box with a full color painting on the front plus the usual promotional material and a picture of the map on the back. The map itself is mounted and in three pieces. It depicts the island of Marnon where the game takes place. The island consists of six areas which have six territories each. Included on the map are eight castles, numbered one to eight, one inland sea called the Sea of Marnon, the Amnon River, and the Great Tunnel, a feature which allows players (or orcs) to move from the North East corner directly to the South-Central area of the map. There are six groups of counters, one for each player, that represent soldiers, five man groups, treasure, heroes, and sorcerors. The other counters are those of the Wizard, the Dragon and the orcs. Other components included in the game are two dice, a rules folder and a special Wizard petition card.

The game takes place in the Earth's distant past. The various wars for the kingship of the island have become so fierce that a powerful wizard, Peacemaker, has put it upon himself to step in and become the kingmaker. He has given each player three treasures: a ring, a crown, and a treasure chest, which are placed on the board by another opponent. When a player's forces have regained all three of his treasures, he is crowned king and has won the game. However, all the other players are trying to do the same thing while preventing everyone else from winning back their treasures. Also, about a third of the island is inhabited by orcs who constantly reproduce like crazy, then frenzy if their area has become overpopulated. Add to this already nasty environment one very hungry dragon who loves to eat human flesh and you have WIZARD'S QUEST.

The beginning of the game turn starts by the orcs multiplying in selected areas (by rolling one die roll per player) to a limit of four orcs per territory. I guess they calculated that allowing more orcs per area would do the players in. Then any territory or castle which has four orcs in it attacks (frenzies) as many adjacent non-orcish territories as possible. The orcs continue to frenzy until one orc is left in the original territory. The worst is not over; now the dragon has it's turn. He randomly wanders around the island eating orcs, men, sorcerors and heroes quite indiscriminately. He will only stop after eating at least one human.

Then the Wizard moves around helping people by bringing reinforcements and a short truce. He moves randomly around the board and any territory he lands in is "prospered" i.e., has three men (or orcs to a maximum of four) added to it. Also no combat can take place in the region he is in, (why do you think they call him "Peacemaker"?), although forces can attack out of that region.

Then finally, the players have their turn. Each turn a new first player is picked randomly. He has the option to petition the wizard (by drawing a card from the petition deck) who usually grants the player some extra men or an additional attacking campaign. The player then counts the territories which are connected to all of his castles and receives that many men as reinforcements if the number is greater than four. If the number is less, the player always receives four men. The next phase is the attack campaign phase where a player can attack one of the adjacent territories or castles. He may attack with the forces in his territory and may move in forces from any friendly adjoining territory as reinforcements. If he succeeds in destroying all opposing forces in that territory or the territory was unoccupied to begin with, he may move in one, some, or all less one of his men. It should be noted that this is the only form of movement and the chance to use an attack campaign should not be passed up.

Combat is fairly simple, the player rolls one six-sided die and if that number falls within his combat range that number is the number of men (or orcs) the opposing side loses. The combat range is the number of men (or orcs) in a hex to a maximum of four with one additional for a hero or two for a sorceror. Also, if the defender is in a woods or mountains he adds one to his range. He adds two if he is in a castle or defending against an attack across a bridge or through the Great Tunnel. Forces with heroes may only be attacked by other heroes or the Dragon. Sorcerors do not kill, but teleport opposing forces to an area of the sorceror's choice.

Set-up is fairly straightforward. First you see who gets to pick his castle first, then everyone else picks. My first choice of castle would be Castle Two because you can get to most places quickly from it. (Five attacking campaigns will get your forces to any territory on the map.) If not, pick one of the other castles near the Great Tunnel. This will give fairly wide access to the map. Then the orcs set up in the remaining castles and one-third of the territories. After the orcs are set up, the players split up the rest of the territories. My advice on picking territories is to try to place men in all the distant corners (close to your treasures at the start). Then each player gets to place a force equaling ten men on the board. Finally, the treasures are given to another player, and he sets them up.

There are three strategies a player can use to win. The first is to ignore kingdom building, leave your kingdom to the orcs, take your Hero and go after your treasures. The second course is the exact opposite. Build up your kingdom, spread your men around the perimeter and push forward to claim your treasures. The third is a mixture of the two: go after the treasure, but spend enough resources and time on your kingdom fighting back the orcs to maintain its size. The dragon should be attacked if possible by the hero because its destruction means six more men at a marginal risk, though you should be sure that you have enough men (say ten) to cover your territory if you blow it. Do everything possible to frustrate whoever is ahead, especially move his last treasure just before he gets there. And above all, watch out for the orcs.

In conclusion, WIZARD'S QUEST is a fun little game. My big complaint about it is the price tag of $12. This is too expensive for what you get: a fancy MicroGame. Another warning is that the game is not very complex. If you are into complexity you should not buy this, though it can be used as an introductory game to show new people what wargaming is like without scaring them. Still, any of the MicroGames can serve this purpose just as well, and they are cheaper.

WIZARD'S QUEST is available from Avalon Hill, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214.

RERUM NOVARUM

by John Steinhouse

- of new things. Written in 1891 by the pope about socialism. Though in my mind the idea of a life-size Melee tournament didn't seem quite as controversial as the principle of socialism I soon found it was going to cause more argument.

I had already tried to arrange a graduation party for Priory's eighth grade with rather poor results. "Oh well," I concluded to myself after this minor setback, "it really wasn't that good of an idea after all." The faculty had simply refused to have the party at the place I suggested. And so it was that I found myself, my father, and Som Saha, leading member of the 8th Grade Student Council, heading for other dining establishments to attempt to find one up to par. Now Saha is a fine person, the only kid in our class who is both scholar and athlete rolled into one, but he has never truly understood how anyone can get any enjoyment out of rolling dice, moving counters, and yelling at one's opponent that he's dead. And so it was that when we came to a restaurant with a medieval theme and I pointed out to a dreadfully bored Saha that a suit of armor sitting in a corner was not allowed to have a halberd in one hand and a shield in the other he merely groaned.

It was at this time that my father said in a laughing voice, "Hey, why don't we have a party with a Melee theme?" Saha groaned more loudly, but I realized here was a fantastic idea. Life-size Melee with authentic-looking weapons, it would not only be easy to arrange, but it would be easy to sell to the class, after all who could possibly object to life-size Melee.

Alas, here thus is the sum of the teaching of all the following sordid results: someone can and always will object to any idea that is new.

I began to conspire with friends and other wargamers, and slowly all began to fall into place. The restaurant was decided upon as was the menu to be served us in a room that uncannily resembled a dungeon. On an unspectacular Tuesday in March, a fellow wargamer announced the party to the class right down to what we were having for dessert. By Friday, an emergency meeting had been called by three or four students who were rather upset. At this meeting a lot of nothing was said very loudly. I sat in a corner with my fellow wargamers, and we plotted our strategies as carefully as we consider any move we might make with a tank or a plane or an infantry division. The bell finally rang, and the group argument broke up into smaller arguments. By the end

of the day the "Execute Steinhouse" signs began to appear, and a faculty member who apparently underestimated wargamers, thanked me for all I had done and said it was too bad the party wasn't going to come off. This appeared to be the sentiment of much of the class; there might not be a party, but thank God that that crazy Steinhouse's idea has been stopped. The next day I called two other wargamers, and we built the board to play Melee on. Setback? Setback?

We continued to conspire. It was decided the party would still be open to anyone in the class who wanted to come, wargamer or not, but we were not going to try to please those who didn't want to watch or play Melee. And so it became an underground idea again. Our opponents knew we were up to something, the question was what. Thus it was that I found myself, with a few of my fellow wargamers, marching down the hall on April 23, precisely one month before the scheduled day of the party, to the bulletin board where we openly declared ourselves. A poster was tacked to the board declaring "Come to Middle-Earth" along with the date and place of the party. I could finally relate to how Luther must have felt when he nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Wittenberg church.

Propaganda was increased and improved. The poster was changed weekly, and a letter went home to every father explaining the party. This letter was signed by four people whom I pulled out of the hall and asked to sign the document. We termed them "The Committee", a name which many times brought the question from my opponents, "What precisely is The Committee's function?"

"To sign the letter of course," I replied.

A word of of explanation must be added about The Committee. The Committee has come to mean many things since I unthinkingly typed it at the bottom of the letter to be signed by four people. My opponents have always considered The Committee as being just me since they are unwilling to admit that the idea could actually be supported by anyone but a madman like Steinhouse. Most of the rest probably define it as the large group of people who aided me in the working of the party. In my mind, The Committee has always been about eight or nine people who were brave enough not to desert me when the "Execute Steinhouse" signs were appearing, and it wasn't too safe to stand next to me. Some of these aren't wargamers, and some didn't even attend the party, yet they were who I was subconciously speaking of when I typed those two words at the bottom of the letter. The Committee was and it still is omnipotent.

The events of the following weeks are too numerous and strange to relate here. The reservations came in quite steadily and all looked pretty good. There was only one little problem, however, that remained to throw a wrench into the gears: another graduation party planned by the Enemies of Melee Association. It was during the 4th week when reservations were pouring in that I learned that this party was no more. We were the only game in town. New ideas had defeated immediate negativeness. We had triumphed. We were exuberant. The poster read "Tolkien

All photos by Tom Ebenhoh

Page **40** General Battle Scene-In the foreground Richard Spaid with mace battles Ken Nieman. Middle-John Steinhouse in black robes battles Mark Christman.

Top Page **41** John Steinhouse in background, battles Mark Christman as the fathers look on.

Bottom Page Second elimination round-Clay Burkett knives Bill Irvin as the referee on the left announces Bill's death. Steve Fenwick, having lost his mask, looks on.

Page **42** The Victors-Front-Ken Nieman on left-3rd place; right, Matt Weyerick-2nd place. Rear-left, Mark Christman-1st place; right, Clay Burkett-4th place.

Lives". And so did The Committee.

It was now about May 18 and all plans had been set, all plans that is except for costumes for the fighters. I hadn't thought medieval costumes that difficult, always assumed one could just call up a costume shop and rent some. During these last five days we must have called up every costume shop in St. Louis trying to find swords and capes. Finally, a professional theater group offered to open their horde of costumes to us. There we found everything we needed right down to daggers. It was D-day minus two.

Of May 22 or 23 very little can be said, because very little occured. The final few hours of school came and went, though I must admit they certainly seemed to take longer than normal hours, and there was nothing left to do. Nothing that is except to go to the restaurant to be sure that everything was in order.

And everything was in reasonable order. Nevertheless my father spent the next few hours piddling with everything until it was perfect. The last hour or so we just spent relaxing, we felt we deserved it after about six months of planning.

Now Saha was to arrive at 6:30 p.m., because he was doorman and was expected to introduce the first guests arriving at 7:00. It was 6:50 and Saha wasn't there. Saha finally arrived at 6:55 and I must admit I was glad to see him in spite of my nerves. Saha was to introduce everyone as a dwarf or elf or hobbit besides giving him a fictitious name and place of residence. Now remember this is the same Saha who couldn't tell the difference between a sword and a crossbow, so for his aid I had written up a sheet explaining that orcs are ugly and hobbits short.

"O.K. Saha, take the sheet, go upstairs, and get ready to shout down names and titles."

"Sheet?"

"Yes, the sheet explaining the difference between orcs and elves."

"I knew I forgot something."

Saha quickly had a few ideas shouted at him as he ran upstairs, just as our first guest arrived. I speedily thought up a name by rearranging some letters and our first guest had been introduced.

After about ten guests had arrived, I felt I had better speak to Saha as he had just introduced the tallest member of our class as a hobbit. As I walked up to see him, my eyes caught upon a sight which caused great wonder, a sight which brougt incredible joy to my heart -- a T.V. camera.

How it knew of us I have never truly figured out. If I did know it would destroy some of the magic of it all. The feeling I had during the rest of the party, and I am quite sure it was also the feeling of my fellow conspirators, was one of triumph. During the past few months we had been derided, scorned, and cursed, but worse, we and our idea had been thought to have been defeated. The Committee hadn't been killed on that tumultous Friday in March, it had merely, like the phoenix, suffered a mock death only to rise in glory.

On May the twenty-third, nineteen hundred and seventy-nine, on the board which I had constructed on a dark and gloomy Saturday so so long ago, I, John Steinhouse, weak from previous injuries, was simultaneously hit by a dagger, a broadsword, and a morningstar. And there I fell -- *VICTOR.*

Heroism and happenstance in a world gone mad. . .sort of.

Of Sorcerors And Seven-Hex Dragons (or--Take my cousin--Please.)

by S. Stonatis

The gladiators squared off--each sizing up the other and attempting to droll more profusely. However, before this psychological battle of experienced warriors could continue, the word was given:

"NO NUKES"'

Swiftly, the taller warrior unleashed a downward stroke with his morningstar, which connected with the husky fighter's left shoulder. At first the blow seemed to cause no damage, as if the mere strap of leather had repelled the entire force of impact.

But immediately, both gladiators looked towards the shrouded dais above the arena. It was suddenly bathed in light, as if illuminated by a wandering myrmidon's trusty flashlight. As spectators and contigents of mercenary cheerleaders alike howled with approval, all eyes focused on a strange-looking object on the center of the dais. Inside its glass-walled exterior lay two white blocks, on whose six sides were patterns of black dots. To the side of the familiar device stood an austere-seeming wizard, nonchalantly engaged in picking his nose with a colorful wand. Without warning, he muttered in either High Elvish or Intermediate Jababbita and the two blocks flung themselves against the walls, rebounding several times before coming to rest.

"Hmmm. . .that's five and five, Gork. . .you hit him," assured the dignified magician, double checking on his fingers. Again the blocks hit the walls and lay still. The wizard made some quick computations.

"Three and six, plus one. . .that's ten points of damage," he enlightened, "subtracting the leather, makes eight points, fellas."

A large, gaping wound opened on the shoulder of the husky warrior. His arm hung, limp and useless, from his side. Angrily, he drew from his scabbard a broadsword and swung it at Gork, the taller fighter. The blocks showed an eleven.

"Sorry Nim, tough luck. Your DX was twelve, minus the two points for Gork's extra damage, equals ten. You missed."

Protesting, Nim pointed an accusing finger at his opponent. Gork responded by swinging his weapon once again. The blocks rebounded with a fury.

"A seven, Gork. You're really getting the rolls today," declared the mildly astonished wizard, Remlap. The blocks tumbled. Remlap was immersed in calculations.

"Two and three, plus one, minus two. . .hey, what do you know? That's four exactly. Nim had an ST of four."

The unfortunate Nim reeled under the blow and hit the stone floor of the arena in unison with crowd's frantic cheers. As his prostrate form was carried off by several squires, third-class, Gork looked thoughtful.

"Poor old Nim. . .he never did have much luck with the rolls," noted Gork, not without some remorse.

Later, while attending the grand feast in honor of the victory over Sir Bilas Annelid and his Underwater Kingdom of Ominous Purple Worms, Gork and Remlap discussed the merits of the arena combat system.

"Well, I wonder about the validity of DX rolls myself, at times," offered Remlap, munching on a well-done goblin leg, "but then, there are always going to be bugs in the system. For instance, the secret DX roll for disproving illusions--remember when I rolled for my dire wolf against Ttam last week? He insisted that I had cheated."

"Yes, but that really didn't matter; it was summoned anyway. . ."

"True, but by the time he'd realized that, his wand hand had been chewed off. Besides, old Ttam wasn't known for following the rules himself--any IQ 6 apprentice could tell you he fudged on his record sheets."

"Hmmm. . .good point," agreed Gork, busy with a hickory-smoked gargoyle wing.

Suddenly, a loud commotion erupted within the pavilion.

"Help. . .he's here!"

"No. . .it can't be!"

"Somebody stop him!"

"I love your greaves!"

Sir Brent, organizer of the grand feast, and a perennially worthless man-at-arms, attempted to calm the annoying crowd.

"Halfling haggis is available at the. . ."

An irritated wizard casually tossed a slippery floor his way and finished his meal undisturbed.

"Now people. . .," began a bruised Sir Brent, but he was silenced by a hexagonally-shaped banana cream pie, resulting in a minus four DX for five turns.

As they hurried past a large neon sign which read: COMING SOON***IN THE LABYRINTH, Gork panted breathlessly.

"What's this all about, Remlap?"

"Gork, it's what I've always dreaded."

"Tennis elbow?"

"No. . .a seven-hex dragon!"

He was right. On great wings, alighting next to the gathering, was the infamous creature. It somewhat resembled a figment of Remlap's imagination, as seen in one of his bad trips as a young, happy-go-lucky necromancer.

"Cousin Andrew, don't do this," frantically cried Sir Brent, as he approached the monstrosity.

"Excuse me. . .Sir Brent? Did I hear you correctly?" asked Remlap.

"Yes. . .this is indeed my cousin," he confirmed with a shamed face. "He was once a travelling salesman. A Yiddish sorceror turned him into a dragon when he tried to persuade him to buy a deluxe microwave. . ."

"Say no more. Follow me."

The dragon was occupied with several brave courtiers, who found that if they attacked in pairs, he simply bowled them over. But if they advanced in groups of three, the transformed door-to-drawbridge salesman could not move at all. Others were too busy to explore the phenomena.

"Someone. . .fetch our allies, the big, triangular giants," cried a desperate knight.

"They're unavailable. They're holding the annual 'Save The Endangered Hobgoblins' telethon," replied Someone. At that moment, all the warriors became paralyzed and the dragon sprang to life.

"I can't move. . .the turn must be over," cried Sir Brent in despair. But Gork and Remlap were not to be underestimated. They approached with caution.

"It looks hungry, Remlap. . .what's the plan?"

The wizard had disappeared.

"Great, he's probably teleported away to the Bahamas," grumbled Gork.

"Not at all, my. . .urp. . .friend. I'm just invisibible. . .invibisle. . ."

"I think the Unicorn delight is getting to you."

"Nonshensh. . .now listen: I'm going to enter his dishestib tract. . .his. . .hic"

"You mean like Noah and the Black Pudding?"

"Egshagly. . .wherein I'll cause a Naushiashtic reaction. . .if I'm lucky. . ."

"I just hope he doesn't have any Chaotic Pepto Bismol on hand, Remlap. . .good luck!"

The brave wizard departed, mumbling in Babylonian as he always did when intoxicated. After pointing him in the proper direction, Gork went to see about a clean-up crew, while Sir Brent, able to move again, was approached by a large machine. It spoke in a rusty voice.

"Excuse me, have you noticed any MHWZ's cavorting about, good sir?" it creaked.

"Is this another one of Sir Jackson's practical jokes?" It was a rhetorical question. As the huge creature rumbled off, Sir Brent heard a tremendous belch from the dragon's direction. He wondered if Remlap's insurance policy would cover injuries sustained while being disgestively incapacitated. It was tricky with wizards. . .

"Everybody's on strike or at the Warriors game," related Gork,"so I guess you know what that means."

"At least Cousin Andrew won't be looking at any menus for a while," pointed out Sir Brent with a chuckle. They walked at an inspired pace towards the site of Remlap's Folly, each making sure to travel his full MA.

"What a lousy party," thought Andrew to himself," first inhospitableness, now indigestion; sometimes I'd rather be an illusion."

OPERATION BOLTCUTTER: Humanizing RIVETS by Glenn L. Williams

RIVETS is Metagaming's MicroGame of robot warfare. One of the unique features of the game is that one of the robots, called "Boppers", may be right next to an enemy unit and not able to attack because it is not programmed to attack that type of enemy unit. As a game of robot warfare, it is very successful, but understandably it lacks a human element. The following article expands the RIVETS system to include human forces and adds a solitaire system for the average gamer.

After the PanEuropean-Combine War, most of Mankind succumbed to virulent biological organisms used by both sides. The Sages of the Web survived. They were descendents of radical dissidents whose ancestors had supported a vague political intrigue on Mars (see MicroGame 7 OLYMPICA). Years of mental training had taught them a unity of mind and body which allowed them to resist the diseases which had ravaged the human population of Earth. The Sages took refuge in the ancient Inca fortress, Macchu, Picchu, high in the Andes. They waited.

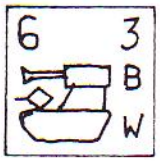
In mindless repetition of the territorial imperative of their Creator-primate, the boorish Boppers carved petty fiefdoms around their Bopper Control and Production Complexes (BCPCs). Since they succeeded, intelligence was apparently no great asset in the warfare of the new age. The Boppers persisted in the same manner as the millenia of generations of cockroaches, by breeding faster (in their BCPCs) and overrunning the countryside. They were scavengers for raw material and spare parts. Soon not one used car lot was left on the face of the Earth. The more powerful BCPCs debated on the long unused airwaves the loss of these resources. They entered mechanical agreements to restrict Bopper production. In their final analysis, there was only one source of raw material left: the Boppers of less powerful BCPCs. Cannibalistic wars of conquest became a prime facet of Bopper military history.

The Sages had bided long enough. They launched a small trial campaign to regain a former agricultural region along the Pacific coast. Human warriors in environmental protection suits sought to destroy the BCPC controlling the region. If it fell, they could occupy the political vacuum. They failed. The devastating viruses were still too virulent, particularly in a combat environment. Some means was needed to neutralize as many Boppers as possible without combat. The Sages rediscovered the ancient science of electronic countermeasures, jamming. New vehicles appeared sprouting as many antennae as hedgehogs have quills. When the new assault wave hit, the poor robots were confused. Some went wild and attacked their own kind. Mankind was on the march.

1.0 THE HUMANS

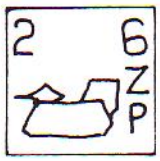
RIVETS has no counters which can be readily adapted to simulate the humans simply because they were obsolete. Just as body armor appeared after centuries of disuse, so the humans reappeared. Below are the new counter types needed for Operation Boltcutter:

Bopper Whopper



Bopper Fodder (inf.)

Zipper



Jammer

1.1 The characteristics of the human units are displayed on their counters in the same format as on the original RIVETS counters. Combat factor is in the upper left corner; movement allowance in the upper right.

1.2 Bopper Whoppers. These are the equivalent of tanks, equipped with unsophisticated missilry and a very big, recoilless cannon that made a lot of noise and scared the smaller Boppers. Bopper Whoppers move and are affected by terrain in the same manner as Big Boppers in the original RIVETS. Like the Big Boppers, they may use ranged combat:

Range in hexes	1	2	3	4	5	6
Combat Strength	6	5	4	3	2	1

1.3 Bopper Fodder Infantry. Human troops are shown in their proper role as a sacrificial lamb on the altar of technological war. They have one great advantage, however. Because of the small size of individual troops, they can close with the Boppers and fight inside the minimum range of the robot's sensors and weaponry. An infantry unit may move directly onto a hex containing Boppers. During combat, it may attack a Bopper at double its combat strength. If two Boppers are stacked in a hex, the infantry may select one to attack and ignore the other. The ignored Bopper may not contribute its strength to the ensuing combat (nor is it adversely affected by that combat). Same-hex attack may not be combined with conventional combat, nor may it be used against Dive Boppers. It may be used against the BCPC. Infantry ignore all terrain for movement and combat, except craters. Infantry may not enter craters.

1.4 Zippers. These are hovercraft infantry transports. A zipper may carry one infantry unit per turn. It picks it up simply by moving through the infantry hex, then deposits it in any hex along the zipper's movement path. Infantry being carried by a zipper are placed beneath the zipper counter. Zippers may not enter forest, swamp or crater hexes. Otherwise, they pay no terrain costs.

1.5 Jammers. Jammers are the electronic countermeasures vehicles whose purpose is to blind and confuse Boppers. Jammers move like Jack Boppers and are similarly affected by terrain.

2.0 JAMMING

The human player has no programming phase. Instead, the first action of a human turn is to determine the effects of jamming. Regardless of the number of jammers he has on the map, the human player rolls one die and consults the jamming table below. All Boppers within a four hex radius of any jammer counter are affected according to the die roll and the Jamming Table. Tiny Boppers are never affected by jamming. Invert a jammed Bopper counter.

JAMMING TABLE

Die Roll	Bopper Type				
	Light	Rocket	Jack	Big	Dive
1	B	B	B	J	J
2	B	B	J	J	J
3	B	J	J	J	—
4	J	J	J	—	—
5	J	J	—	—	—
6	J	—	—	—	—

2.1 Explanation of Jamming Results.

"—" No Effect -- the Bopper type is not jammed.

"J" Jammed -- invert all Boppers of that type within the jamming radius. They may neither move nor attack that turn.

"B" Bonkers -- the Boppers of that type within the jamming radius go wild. The human player may use them without restriction (including "programmed to attack" restrictions) during the current game turn. They are jammed during the Bopper turn.

2.2 All missiles in jamming radius are automatically destroyed. This will only occur in a two player version of the game, as in the solitaires system below BCPCs do not produce missiles.

2.3 Jammed and bonkers Boppers regain their normal funtioning at the end of the turn in which they were jammed. Flip their counters face up.

3.0 BIOWAR - THE BOPPERS REVENGE

Since the area of Operation Boltcutter contains swarms of virulent disease organisms, any rupture in a troop's environmental protection suit or in a vehicle's sealed crew capsule will result in a swift death. Whenever a Bopper attacks and does not destroy the human defender, the Bopper gets an extra die roll. On a roll of one, the environmental protection of the human is pierced and the human unit is destroyed. The result is exactly as if the Bopper attack has resulted in a DX. The Bopper gets this bonus even if the Bopper is destroyed in the attack. An infantry counter being carried by a zipper is not destroyed if the zipper is destroyed by biowar, but its counter is placed on the map.

4.0 HUMAN REINFORCEMENTS

The humans have no equivalent of the BCPC to produce reinforcements. In Operation Boltcutter, the human player may voluntarily reduce his original attack force by up to one third. He may then select reinforcements equal to double that number of combat factors (up to two thirds of the original force strength). These must be selected before the game begins. They enter the map from the map edge that the humans entered at the game's beginning. They may only enter if the human rolls a one during his movement phase. If he rolls a six, he permanently loses one half of the reinforcements. Each time he rolls a six before the reinforcements enter, he loses one half of the remaining reinforcements. Round fractions down.

5.0 SOLITAIRE RIVETS

5.1 The following sections give a solitaire system for RIVETS. In it, the humans appear at a time when the BCPC is no longer the Queen of Battle it had been, when the machines are a little sluggish from disuse. The player is human.

5.2 BCPC Production Schedule. BCPC production for the current turn is determined by rolling a die during the Bopper Production Phase and then consulting the BCPC Production Table. The BCPC will produce Boppers during that turn as determined by the table. Read the line from left to right to determine the order of production for that turn. Counter limits and the control limits on Dive and Tiny Boppers must be observed. If all available Boppers of that type have been produced, move right to the next type. The BCPC will not produce missiles. If it does not have the build points needed to produce a Bopper type, it will continue to the right until it comes to a type it can produce. If the BCPC cannot produce any Boppers by the schedule, it will save the points for succeeding turns.

BCPC PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

Die Roll	Bopper Types to be Produced (Read from left to right)		
1	Tiny	Big	Rocket
1	Jack	Light	Dive
2	Big	Rocket	Jack
2	Light	Dive	Tiny
3	Rocket	Jack	Light
3	Dive	Tiny	Big
4	Jack	Light	Dive
4	Tiny	Big	Rocket
5	Light	Dive	Tiny
5	Big	Rocket	Jack
6	Dive	Tiny	Big
6	Rocket	Jack	Light

5.3 Reprogramming. The BCPC will attempt reprogramming whenever a Bopper type is left without a target. An example would be when Light Boppers are programmed to attack (PTA) infantry and all infantry are on zippers. All Boppers of that type will begin movement by the shortest route to their BCPC. At the beginning of the third turn after such a recall, reprogramming occurs. Roll a die once for each Bopper type being reprogrammed that phase. Consult the Programmed to Attack Table below:

Programmed to Attack (PTA) TABLE

Die Roll	Target
1	Jammer
2	Zipper
3-4	Fodder
5-6	Whopper

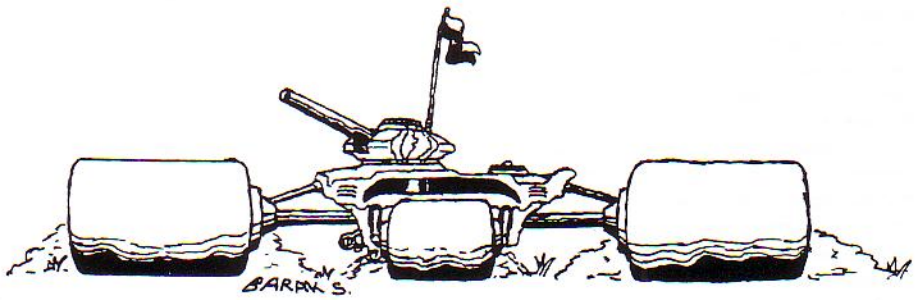
5.3.1 If the die roll results in a PTA against an unavailable target, or if two Bopper types are already PTA that target type, roll again.

5.3.2 Emergency Field Reprogramming. This is the greatest deviation from the RIVETS rules and is included to give the inhuman opponent some chance against a devious human player. If some members of a Bopper type do not reach the BCPC by the end of the second turn following a recall (the turn before reprogramming would occur), the BCPC may attempt to reprogram them anyway during the next Bopper Reprogramming Phase.

5.3.2.1 For all Boppers of the recalled type still in the field, roll one die. On a 1-4 they were reprogrammed along with their robot brothers and sisters. On a 5-6 the field reprogramming attempt failed and the BCPC turns them off. Remove their counters from play.

5.3.2.2 Jammed Boppers may never be field reprogrammed, they are turned off.

5.4 Tiny Boppers are not programmed to attack specific units (as in the original RIVETS). In Operation Boltcutter they will move toward the nearest jammer and attempt to attack it. Tiny Boppers will stop whenever they are adjacent to any human unit and attack it.



5.5 BCPC Attacks. The BCPC will attack the strongest human units within range first, concentrating all its strength in one attack. If two stacks within range have the same strength, it will attack the stack with fewer units. If both stacks are the same, it will attack the closer.

6.0 OPERATION BOLTCUTTER

This is the solitaire scenario for RIVETS using the system and expansion above. The player represents a human Sage army attacking a BCPC on the Peruvian coast.

6.1 Boppers. A superior BCPC is placed on the map within the normal restrictions of the game. Production is determined using the BCPC Production Table (section 5.2) to a maximum of 60 points. Again using the production schedule, the Boppers are placed one to a hex in rings out from the BCPC. Boppers of the first type produced go in the first ring, those produced second in the second ring, etc. Each ring is an odd number of hexes from the BCPC (1 hex, 3 hexes, 5, etc.). Space the Boppers evenly along the ring, stacking only after all hexes in the ring have been filled with a Bopper. If there are still excess Boppers of that type, move them outward to the next ring.

6.2 Humans. The human player selects a force of 42 combat points and three jammers. There may never be more than three jammers in a game, and they must always be part of the attack force which begins the game. He may use the reinforcement rule of section 4.0. He deploys along the narrow map edge furthest from the BCPC.

6.3 Boppers are now programmed.

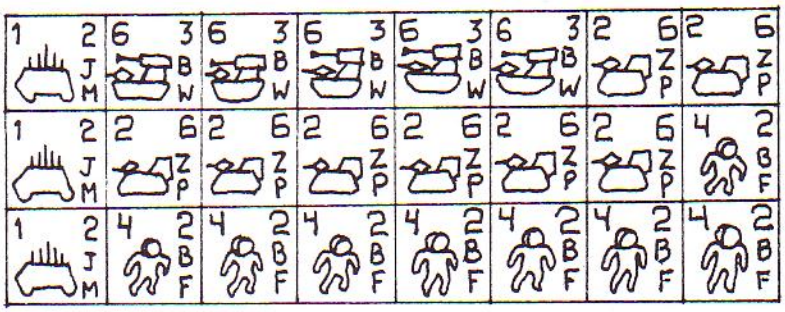
6.4 The human player is the first player. He has no production, programming or control phases. His turn instead begins with a jamming phase.

6.5 The BCPC has no Production Phase the first turn, but it does receive the production points which are saved until the following turn.

6.6 The human wins by reducing the BCPC as is normal in RIVETS. His mechanical opponent wins if all three jammers are destroyed.

6.7 Cheating. Very few human wargamers can resist re-rolling the die or taking back an unfavorable move. If the player does so, he immediately grants the BCPC a moral victory. If he persists in cheating, the BCPC-in-the-Sky deprograms his soul.

RIVETS is a game whose potential for variation has not been fully tapped. Robert Taylor's "Designer's Introduction" in TSG 14 can be used to keep your variant in line with the game's underlying assumptions and philosophy. Mike Crane's "Encounters of an Unlikely Kind" in TSG 17 gives an example of melding OGRE and RIVETS. Surely somewhere before the PanEuropean-Combine War Boppers and humans fought side by side. Imagine an attack on the Web Generator in OLYMPICA supported by Boppers. They would be fine for combat in a hostile environment such as SPI's TITAN STRIKE!, which already has drone combat vehicles. Drop a few from orbit in STARSHIP TROOPERS or give the poor skinnies a few for support. The concept of RIVETS is enormously adaptable to science fiction wargaming. Next, the battle for the last "4-in-1 Oil" warehouse!



News & Plugs

GAMING CONVENTIONS

USACON II: (Jan. 18-20) Hosted by the University of South Alabama Conflict Simulation Society, the con will include tournament competition in SF/fantasy RP and board gaming, as well as competitions in wargames of all other periods. Registration, $2.50 incl. limited food and accomodations. Con starts at 12 noon, at the Gamma Commons Bldg. of the University. For info, send SASE to Leo Vaulin, 5856 Lisloy Dr.; Mobile, AL 36608.

ORCON (THE FOUR ORCONS OF THE APOCALYPSE): (Jan. 18-20) A wide assortment of tournaments, open gaming, films, and an auction will be held, as well as lectures, panels, and seminars. Admission will be $8.00 at the door and $6.00 prepaid. For more information please contact The Armchair Strategists Club c/o The University Activities Center, CUSF Fullerton, CA 92634.

WarCon '80: (Feb. 8-10 -- changed from last announcement in TSG) Memorial Student Center, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX. Board games, role-playing games, miniatures, demonstrations, films, and speakers. Metagaming will be running tournaments for several of its games, as well as seminars and IN THE LABYRINTH trips. For information, write GROMETS, Student Programs Office, P.O. Box 5718, College Station, TX 77844.

DunDraConV: (Feb. 16-18) Villa Hotel, San Mateo, CA. The convention includes tournaments in Dungeon, Cosmic Encounters, D&D, and others, as well as films, seminars, and computer games. Info: DunDraConV, 386 Alcatraz, Oakland, CA 94618.

SimCon II (March 22-23) River Campus at the Unversity of Rochester, Rochester, New York. The convention will include tournaments in D&D, MicroGames, Diplomacy, Cosmic Encounters, and many others. Info: SimCon II, Box 5142 Riverstation, Rochester, NY 14627.

Empiricon II/ConSpiracy: (July 4-6, 1980) The convention is a combined science fiction/gaming con. Events will include a Diplomacy tournament, FRP gaming, open gaming, a dealer's room, films, and folksinging. Info: EmpiriCon II/ConSpiracy, POB 682, Church Street Station, New York, NY, 10008.

GLASC V: (Greater Los Angeles Simulation Convention): (July 11-13) Tournaments, open gaming, dealers, and more. For more information, contact L. Daniel, 7048 Keokuk Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91306.

SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTIONS

ChattaCon V: (Jan. 4-6) Sheraton Downtown, Chattanooga, Tenn. GoH: Joan Vinge. Info: ChattaCon, PO Box 211173, Chattanooga, TN 37421.

CoastCon '80: (March 14-16) Biloxi, Mississippi. Mem: $10. GoH: C.J. Cherryh. Info: CoastCon, PO Box 6025, Biloxi, MS 39532.

AggieCon XI: (March 27-30) Texas A&M University, College Station, TX. GoH: Poul Anderson. Films, panels, art contest, more. Metagaming will be there. Info: AggieCon XI, PO Box 5718, College Station, TX 77844.

NorwesCon 3: (March 28-30) Seattle, Washington. GoHs: Alfred Bester, Fred Pohl, Theodore Sturgeon. Art show, films, panels, gaming. Info: Norwescon 3, PO Box 24207, Seattle, WA 98124.

NoreasCon 2 (1980 World SF Con): (Aug. 29-Sept. 1) Boston, MA (more later).

NEW PRODUCTS

A second edition of The Chaosium's fantasy-role-playing game RUNEQUEST has come out. It has new artwork and cleaned-up rules.

CULTS OF PRAX, which is a second book for the RUNEQUEST system, has also been released by The Chaosium. It describes 15 cults and deities of Glorantha.

Lou Zocchi has published an improved and expanded ALIEN SPACE battle manual.

PAINTING FANTASY MINIATURES is a new book, available from Morningstar Publishing Co., 223 Morningside NE, Albuquerque, NM 87108 for $4.95.

Bearhug Publications has several new games dealing with man-to-man archaic-weapons combat. These are BUSHI, which deals with Oriental weaponry, GLADIATOR: MEN VS. ANIMALS. They also have THE ACCOUTERY, THE TREASURY CHEST, and THE TREASURY, which are playing aids for role-playing games. Write to Bearhug Publications, P.O. Box 12, Mission, Kansas 66201 for more information.

Logomorphic Productions (Andrew Walters, 231 Blackfield Drive, Tiburon, CA 94920) has announced DICTATOR, GALAXY, and FLY FIGHT. Not seen.

BLOODTREE REBELLION is a new game designed by Lynn Willis and published by Game Designer's Workshop. Like Lynn's previous games for both Metagaming and The Chaosium, BLOODTREE REBELLION has an interesting, detailed background and political rules. It deals with a guerilla war on an alien planet in the far future. It is moderately complex.

GDW has also released three new TRAVELLER supplements. HIGH GUARD is about space navies and large warships. SPINWARD MARCHES is about the frontier worlds of the Imperium. CITIZENS is for generation of characters, and contains pre-generated characters. Not seen.

TRIBES OF CRANE is a play-by-mail fantasy game, which includes a monthly newsletter. Write to Schubel and Son, PO Box 214848, Sacramento, CA 95821 for more information.

UNIVERSE II is a play-by-mail game in which players are commanders of starships exploring a new universe. Information available from Clemens and Associates, Inc., P.O. Box 18287, Irvine, CA 92713.

RURITANIA is an excellent gaming fanzine edited by Tony Watson (201 Minnesota Street, Las Vegas, Nevada 89107), who has written many articles for THE SPACE GAMER. It features a column on sf minigames, as well as information about postal DIPLOMACY and other things.

The Chicago Wargamers Association should be of interest to Chicago area gamers. They have a really nice newsletter. Write to Tony Adams, 3605 Bobolink, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008.

The L-5 Society is an organization which is devoted to the promotion of space colonization. Interested readers should write to them at 1620 N. Park, Tucson, AZ 85719.

TOURNEY

The forerunner of a nation-wide series of Risk tournaments, to be sponsored by Parker Brothers, was held in Austin on December 7. The winner was Metagaming designer Steve Jackson.

The touney was organized by James Allen of Austin, who set it up to raise funds for a local halfway house. Prizes were donated by various businesses, tourney space was provided by a disco, and "Risk" sets were courtesy of the publisher, Parker Brothers.

According to Allen, "I ran a Monopoly tourney here in January. People liked it - but they wanted to know if we could do the same thing with Risk. Parker Brothers does a national Monopoly tourney every year, so I wrote them. They wrote back asking for a proposal. So I sent them one, and they sent me the games, and here they are. . ."

Plans for the national tournament are apparently still vague. "This tournament today won't be part of the first "official" Parker Brothers tournament; people will have to start over. But they promised me they'd mention this one in the tournament rules, as the one that started it all."

Allen's tournament - which attracted 32 players at $3 each - was played "by the book". Games ran 1½ hours, plus an extra 1 to 30 minutes (determined by a secret drawing). Thus, players could not know exactly when their games would end. Scoring was based solely on armies owned and cards held at the moment the whistle blew. The tourney ran three rounds. The final game lasted slightly over an hour, ending as Steve blew his last opponent off the board with a triple-6 roll. He was immediately drenched with champagne.

Winning strategy for the game, according to Jackson: "Don't attack until the odds are right. Then, don't let up." The second-place winner was Ron Pearce. Third went to Paul Davidson, and fourth to Butch Sanders.

Tournament organizer Allen plans to do an Austin tournament each month from now on. For information about the projected *national* Risk tourney, contact Carol City, Public Relations Manager, Parker Bros., 50 Dunham Road, Beverly, Mass. 01915; 617-927-7600.

Sell Us Your Game Design!

Metagaming will drastically up its production of games during 1980. The decrease in effort for TSG will free resources for a number of new projects. This is your chance to turn your favorite idea into a bit of money. No one gets rich off game design. The compensation does offer a tangible reward for giving gamers a bit of new fun.

DESIGN PACKAGES

Metagaming is working on three basic sizes of games. The general component constraints are listed below. New, unpublished designers should try to do a good MicroGame before attempting a larger project.

MicroGames: These games package down to 4" x 7". Rules should be 3,000 to 7,000 words long. Maps are four to six 4" x 7" panels. Counters should be no more than about 100. Preference is given to simpler games which explain play suitable for novices. Play times should be 30 to 90 minutes for 2 to 4 players.

Mid-size games: These games package down to 5½" x 8½". Rules should be 5,000 to 12,000 words. Maps are two to six 8½" x 5½". Counters should number no more than 240. Again, these games need to be moderately simple with emphasis on ease of learning. Play times should be one to four hours for 4 to 6 players.

Large games: These games package down to 8½" x 11". Rules should run no more than 20,000 words. However, each of these games is viewed as a separately crafted item. They have no constraint other than our desire to keep their retail price under $19.95. Play time should not exceed eight hours for a minimum of four players.

Topics: We publish science fiction, fantasy, historical and popular themes. MicroQuests are programmed and/or solitaire adventures which are enhancements of other game rules.

Criteria: Mostly we look for fun, easily learned, playable games. We aren't interested in accurate simulations of anything unless it fits the first three criteria. Remember, you're writing for a majority of people to whom gaming is new or only a casual interest. They won't get their fun out of something they can't learn or understand. Profuse use of graphics and examples is encouraged.

SUBMISSION

Metagaming only considers submissions which are accompanied by the submission form with this article. This form contains our buying policy for games. The following are guidelines to follow in preparing your game for submission.

1. Playtesting: Any design submitted must be playtested. We can easily spot games that haven't been played competitively. So, be sure you try your idea on other people before sending it.

2. All components necessary for play, except dice, must be submitted.

3. Rules must be well written technically. If you don't follow the rules of correct English, others can't understand your ideas.

4. Try to do something new, even if only from a different viewpoint. Don't send games based on books, movies, TV or other games. You could, for example, do a Battle of the Bulge game, but not one that requires the use of another company's game as a start.

5. Don't count on us: Ideas are cheap. Everyone has a lot of ideas, good ones, that could make good, even great, games. The idea is the easy part, we've got'em too. What we're going to pay you for is the hard work of implementing that idea into a fun, playable

game. Don't expect us to take your rough notes and a few ideas and make you a great game-- that's your job.

6. Gimmicks are important. A new wrinkle to play gives your game an interest value. But, don't be afraid to use old methods to solve old situations. Old methods may be very well worked out.

After you've submitted a game, we give it an initial screening read. Over half of all submissions are returned at this point. We will try to give you suggestions for improvements which might make the game more desirable to Metagaming. If initial screening is passed, the game goes to play test evaluation. Again, more than half the titles are rejected at this point. However, you'll get a more detailed analysis from us as to the game's weaknesses. MOST of these games could be made into publishable games even though the minority make the attempt. If playtest evaluation is favorable, we'll again send detailed commentary and ask you to revise the design in certain ways or with certain principles in mind. This represents acceptance by Metagaming in principle of your design. We like it, and want the rework to make the game more than just another hack effort.

Don't forget that your game is a vehicle for entertainment. Only a minority buy games for the intellectual exercise of comprehending complexity or detail. Mothers buy games for kids, kids buy games for themselves, students, lawyers, engineers, girl friends, all buy our games in hope of some enjoyable, escapist diversion. You let them down if you squeeze all the life and fun from your game and serve up something dry and inscrutable. It may impress *you,* but the goal is to entertain, not impress. Make your rules a joyful ease to read. Make your examples and explanations bridge the gap of uncomprehension.

COMPENSATION

Basic compensation for a game is no less than $500.00 for a MicroGame. A higher minimum will be paid for medium and larger sized games. More will be paid for the second and third design by the same designer. More may be paid to previously published designers.

In some cases, Metagaming may offer to contract with a designer for several games when we decide to purchase one game. If you are good enough, we'll want to be able to plan on publishing several titles you design. This is not something every designer should expect.

Do not be disappointed if several rounds of improvements are necessary before a game is ready for publication. Working by mail takes time. The effort is worth it for a quality game.

The form reproduced with this article is the form you should submit with your game design. If you send us an idea and ask if we're interested all we can say is, "we'd have to see it in playtestable form to know". So, send us games, not ideas. The game is the measure, not the concept.

Well, that's it. Your chance at sharing your creativity with others. Your chance to see gamers having fun with YOUR game at conventions. You won't get rich or famous, but you will get the satisfaction of knowing thousands of people got some joy from your effort.

TO: Howard Thompson
Metagaming
Box 15346
Austin, TX 78761

Dear Mr. Thompson,

I am submitting my design entitled . . . . . to Metagaming for evaluation. My submission of this design constitutes an offer to sell it to Metagaming. This offer includes present and future rights to reproduce the design or deriviative materials in any form. I certify that this design offered for sale to Metagaming is entirely the product of my creative effort. I am legally able to sell this design to Metagaming in its entirety and am so offering it for sale.

I also understand that Metagaming will require completion of a final design to their specification. Metagaming reserves the right to correct, alter or revise designs acquired as Metagaming sees fit. This submission constitutes a first draft proposal.

Metagaming agrees to evaluate this submission subject to the following conditions. Metagaming is not bound by any agreement that violates these conditions.

1. That this design is not being concurrently sumbitted to or evaluated by any other firm or entity.
2. Metagaming will provide written results of its evaluation and/or screening of the design within three to six months of receipt.
3. The designer will undertake to accomplish any changes specified by Metagaming should Metagaming accept the design for publication.
4. Specified changes will be of a reasonable nature and be subject to revision as a result of discussions and correspondence with the designer.
5. Compensation for the design will not be less than $500.00 for a MicroGame sized design and more for subsequent and/or larger designs.
6. Should Metagaming reject the design for publication the designer is free to dispose of his submission as he pleases.

DESCRIPTION

1. Approx. rules word count:
2. Map size:
3. Number of play counters:
4. Number of players:
5. Average play time:
6. Brief description:
7. Other Components:

Date..... Submittor.....

Signature.....

Letters to the Editor

Mark Schulzinger's article on the psychology of wargaming came at a time when I had been thinking a lot about the subject myself. I spent a long, hard summer with two young children, and now that fall (and back to school!) has, at last, come, I am ripe -- over ripe -- for some "greater levels of 'stimulus complexity.'"

I do, however, wish to take issue with certain aspects of his Freudian interpretations. I smiled a bit at the proposition that gamers use the conflict of their games to sublimate their sexual urges. While it is probably true that a great many gamers are adolescents, I have not found it to be true that interest in gaming decreases as age and sexual activity increases (take heart, kids!). Nor are gaming and "maintaining the family" mutually exclusive. Take it from someone in that small group of gamers in the 30-40 range.

My husband had been gaming for three years when I met him our freshman year in college in 1965. I resisted as best I could his attempts to turn our dates into "battles" (Oh, Freud!) but soon I was gaming too, reluctantly. We were still gaming four years later when we were married. Now, ten years later, we are not only gaming, but game designing. I even have a game design of my own that I'm working on. I must admit that his more frequent, and more challenging, opponent is our daughter, Kether, age six. They play DUNGEON (the board game), WARRIORS AND WARLOCKS, and any other game she can talk her dad into playing with her. Our two year old son, Keith, rolls the dice.

An old gaming buddy of my husband was lucky enough to find a girl that not only agreed to play war games with him, but actually *understood* and *enjoyed* them. Naturally, he married her. She then had the wisdom to insist that she seldom, if ever, required the use of the dining room table; and that she not only didn't mind tanks and trees covering the carpeting, but she actually found them fascinating! We received a birth announcement from this couple that more closely resembled the presentation of a new make of tank: the "specifications" were given, the parents were listed as "crew," and the fuel for this lucky new model was "mother's milk and love." Any bets on how early this kid will be gaming? It seems to me that gaming and a happy family life go together like. . . well, like mothers' milk and love.

From the birth announcements that appear in the various gaming magazines from time to time, I would guess that there are masses of us out there somewhere, we post-adolescents in "the 30-40 range," maintaining a family, making a living, loving and gaming.

Although many think of game-playing as an adolescent activity, this old lady intends to keep on playing as long as I'm Jungian enough to enjoy it!

Dorothy K. Williams
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This letter is in reference to an article which appeared in Space Gamer no. 25, entitled "Everyday Life in The Fantasy Trip". I would like to make a few points in rebuttal.

For one thing, as I mentioned in a previous letter, the TFT system is relatively free of numbers, and the combat system is elegant and straightforward. This allows for a great amount of separation from the numbers, as opposed to the D&D system which requires constant reference of tables until well-accustomed to the system, which is cumbersome in the first place. Even with the simplicity of the TFT combat system, it is very logical (a quality which I think is essential) and allows much detail.

In the TFT world, goblins are not that ferocious, and the players would know this. "Numbers" has nothing to do with it!

All right, so the author said that all this was fine. But his other comments I just cannot agree with.

For one thing, illusions last only one minute. I don't think our most powerful wizard could afford to re-create his floating castle every minute, and then it would disappear when he goes to sleep anyway. Some powerful wizard may come up with a "permanence" spell, and that's just great for him, but he would have to teach it to at least fifty other wizards in order to be able to cast it on an entire castle before the precious minute was up. Even then the spell would have to be a 18+ IQ spell, and how many 18+ IQ wizards are there in the world?

Now take art. Art, especially abstract, is not as simple as think-up-an-image-and-put-it-on-the-canvas. In any case, it takes quite a bit of training (I would estimate at least a year) to create even the simplest images. The average bum-on-the-street is not going to have the patience, money, or connections to get that kind of training. And if "Cidri" is anything like Tolkien's Middle Earth, most of the rest of the population is not going to, either. So, if this holds true in Cidri, there aren't going to be enough wizards with the training around, anyway. And there still is the problem of the one-minute limit.

Energy conservation even occurs in the magical world. Ya don't get nothin' for nothin', as they say. (Tanstaafl, in other words.) Even the aid spell has its limitations: In order to cure the sick, one must become sick. It is a mere matter of *redistribution* of the sick, not the *curing* of them. Oh, yes, a mighty wizard could cure many people without falling sick, but over the long run, AID is only an aid, not a cure-all. Slow movement and freeze have time limitations, and rightfully so - they stop quite a lot of energy. Grocer's and furnaces could not afford to hire twelve wizards a day just to keep their food cold or their insides hot.

A palace for every couple, eh? Note that a hex is just about one meter wide (if I am to trust that horses are portrayed accurately in "Mounted Melee" TSG no.16). A person lying down therefore takes two hexes. Note also that a one-hex illusion is an IQ 11 spell, and mastering of such a spell would be difficult for the uninitiated. To build such a palace, one must spend at least a year or so in a thaumaturgy institute before any building whatsoever occurs. And at one hex per 2ST, that would be quite an endeavor. Let's say that 2 ST points can be regained every day. In order to build a room 3 x 5 hexes (including roof), it would take two weeks. Not to mention the fact that a wizard standing by with a permanence spell is necessary. If that spell takes, say, 6 ST plus 2 for every hex (or 8 ST forlhex, and this is a conservative estimate), it would take four days for him to recover completely for every hex. So this means that it would take almost three months to build such a room, if all concerned were to emerge from the construction undamaged. If a palace were to be built, this slow pace of construction would be imperative in order to save strength for the other rooms.

Alright, let's say that all this becomes possible and some new method of "getting more than you put in" is discovered. Do you think that a barbarian horde could tear down such a society so easily? Simple disbelief is ridiculous (and if permanence, as in D&D, were discovered and improved radically so that everyone could use it without much training, disbelief would be impossible anyway, since the objects would be permanent, in every sense of the word.) It is the same as a bunch of barbarians with broadswords were to come and try to take over NORAD, or even New York, for that matter. One shot from any modern firearm would stop them cold. (That, by the way, is why you don't see soldiers going out to war with platemail. It just has no effect upon high-speed projectiles.) So even that would not happen to our beloved Cidri.

Okay. Now to the aid spell again. Yes, that is a problem, but only if you have fifty apprentice wizards lying around. And if you have fifty ST 10 apprentices there to help you, why not? They've got the strength, and you have the ability. As I said before, *aid* is only an aid. What if a 7-hex dragon (real) comes and stacks those helpless apprentices? No more apprentices. I mean, if two wizards *both* had fifty apprentices to back him/her up, it would be an even match.

In conclusion, I would like to say that Cidri is not as strange as Mr. Halbert would propose it to be. Illusions are not so easily had, and palaces made of magic brick are not so easily created. Remember, as Heinlein put it, TASNTAAFL!!

Mits Hadeishi
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Dear Mr. Thompson:
RE "Where We're Going TSG No.2"

One of the Newtonian Laws states that a body remains in constant straight-line motion until acted upon by a force. As there are no shortages of forces acting upon bodies -- or historical trends -- curves are the rule in nature.

The individual can't *usually* affect larger events. There do occur occasional points where an Oswald or Martin Luther King Jr. influence the future tremendously. And many less tremendous influences, such as your plan for future survival, can add up into major influences.

Russia is an apostle for its brand of Communism, an anything-for-the-cause global troublemaker. Some policeman! It has its own troubles, however, so the future will more likely see world power split between a large number of competing nations and organizations.

It is worth considering what a less passive approach than the one you advocate might achieve. If the U.S. decides to mobilize it's energy resources for example, everything from moonshine to orbital solar collectors, it could well become an energy exporter again, with all that entails.

(This letter date: 14 Aug 1979. —Ed.)

Sidney J. Jolly
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I enjoy reading a lot of the articles in TSG, but I am disturbed by the tendency I see developing toward articles which philosophize and analyze gamers. I always thought TSG was supposed to analyze games, and that is why I buy it. I have no particular desire to read articles telling me about my secret motives for gaming, or how gaming acts as a surrogate for sex (it doesn't; I have another outlet for that). I dread the day when those type of articles outnumber the game analysis articles and pray that day never comes.

Your magazine is unique on my list in having editorials done by the publisher. I wish I could be happy with them, but they are the one part of the magazine which comes closest to irritating me. In no. 23 we got an editorial berating gamers becuase they weren't buying the games they were (are) supposed to, and in no. 24 we get a spiel about how civilization is dying and how we might as well throw in the towel. So cheerful! If civilization does die I can see very few people who will be interested in playing games. Anyway, what I want to see in Where We're Going is information on upcoming games (surely you must have some) and not lectures on the deficiencies of gamers or how you are going to survive the apocalypse.

Finally, I must take issue with Mark Watson over his review of STARGATE, which contained two false statements. First of all, the map is not three dimensional. It is a two dimensional playing surface. The rules state that it represents a multi-dimensional warped space around the stargate, and thereby impose a movement restriction: ships using regular movement travel only in straight lines unless they want to let every enemy ship within eight hexes take a free shot at them, as ships lose their defensive ability when forcing themselves from one space to another. This is to warn any who think they will get a game with a three dimensional movement system; it just ain't so! If you want that, get VECTOR 3. The second point is that Virunian Control and transport units do not go berserk when not stacked with their control units; they go berserk when their control units are destroyed. This makes it possible for the Virunian to control his ships, but he must watch his stacking or he will get a nasty chain reaction when a control unit is destroyed. I recall destroying half the Virunian fleet with one shot in this manner in one game. Finally, Mark did not mention that the primary goal of the coalition player is to ensure that the Virunian never assembles any trishipS. TrishipS are for most purposes both invincible and invulnerable, and a Virunian with two complete trishipS has essentially won the game. I have played STARGATE several times, and I have found it to be a very good game.

One more thing, I think it would be nice if you change the Space Gamer logo to something more pleasing to the eye. The present logo is all sharp angles and hidden letters, and looks like it is trying to be "artsy". I think TSG would be served much better by a typeface that, while bold, demonstrates a solid and science oriented background, in the manner of Letraset's Countdown. It's a minor point, but I'm sure many of your readers agree with me.

TSG is certainly a provocative magazine, and the articles, for the most part, are interesting and stimulating. I'll be very interested to see where you do go in the next few years.

Bryan Van Blaricom
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It may discomfort you a bit to realize that as far as I am concerned, you are the most provocative SF editorial writer since John A. Campbell. The last couple of "Where We're Going" features have turned me to my typewriter again, to get one or two or three things off my chest.

I think your gripe about "A Problem of Quality" misses two points, one of some importance and the other worth mentioning. The important point is simply this: a lot of people like me do most or all of their game purchasing by mail, which doesn't give you much chance to look carefully before you buy. What I can do (and do-dee-doo-doo) is avoid buying any more games from companies I feel have stung me, without seeing a copy first. For that reason, neither BATTLELINE (based on those two horrid turkeys ALPHA OMEGA and OBJECTIVE ATLANTA) nor ATTACK WARGAMING (based on everything I have seen about their operation) can expect orders from me through the mail. I agree game ratings aren't much help (I think one of the major wonders of the contemporary gaming scene, something that really amazes me, is how a turkeyclucker [yep, I got stuck on that one] like OBJECTIONABLE MUSSCOW could be not only toprated on S&T's SF gaming list, but also rate very highly on a comparative basis with other games [e.g. CAESAR] which are, in my opinion, good games). On the other hand good reviews, like those in FIRE AND MOVEMENT, can be a real help. I've saved an awful lot of money through reading F&M. True, there are a lot of indiscriminate buyers. But if you stick around in gaming long enough, you become pretty discriminate, and the plethora of new titles in categories that only 5 years ago (like SF and naval warfare) were underrepresented is simply going to have to force gamers to be more selective. I can remember a time, as a child, when it was possible to own and build all the plastic model kits that were available, something which ceased to be possible over a decade ago. And less than a decade ago it was possible to own and play all the commercially available wargames. Again, no longer true. Moreover, there are some gamers who will buy a $30.00 game, if it lies in a real interest plane and has a reputation for quality construction: I just sprang that amount and more for a copy of THE NEXT WAR and another of WAR IN EUROPE. And having looked at these games I don't regret it a bit -- I would far prefer one good expensive game to a whole host of cheap ones which probably aren't any good anyway.

The minor point is simple: a lot of bad games get bought for war gamers by well-intentioned but ignorant buyers at Christmas and birthdays.

As far as Micros are concerned [and Holy Retrorockets, Flash!] aren't there a lot of them suddenly rabbitswarming on the market: in addition to you and SPI, a couple of Texas neighbors of yours (Cole, Crump, and Eldridge,) but TASK FORCE GAMES (I bought their OPERATION CERBRUS, and like it), GDW has theirs, and now OPERATIONAL STUDIES GROUP has come out with theirs. Looks like the only major left standing aside is AVALON HILL, and I bet they keep out of it, because of the structure of their operation], yes, they're good little games (most of them: frankly, I didn't care for RIVETS at all, but GEV, OGRE, and WARPWAR are as good as any I own). But as a class they suffer from what I call the 'tactical game syndrome': they are all middle without beginning or end. Comparing SPI's STONEWALL (which is a full game) to RIFLE & SABRE (which is a collection of scenarios) may make my case clearer; comparing GDW IMPERIUM with your own WARPWAR could stand as another example. What the MicroGames represent most is a series of systems, which have been well-proved as stand-alone modules: what they need now is integration into a larger game format. Just as the revised tactical modlue of RIFLE & SABRE was integrated into TSS and STONEWALL.

But the topper was your article in no. 24. I can't think of a list of factors with which I could disagree any more strongly. Taking your suggestions point by point:

1. Of course the individual can effect larger events. Singly, what a difference individuals like Ralph Nader or Sirhan Sirhan have made! Major economic, cultural, and social trends simply are not beyond our control, if we have the wit and will to use the systems we already have in place. One good example: after World War II, the cultural/social trend was to large families and domesticated wives. This has now been totally changed to small families and working wives.
2. Probably true, certainly for the short run. Probably not true in the long run, both because scarcity is essentially a demand function, and priority readjustments will alter demands (and expectations), and because new technologies and systems cannot be ruled out entirely as having some prospect for alleviating the energy situation.
3. I think government has about reached its peak. Proposition 13 is going to the wave of the future. Welfareism is more and more seen as something that does not work. There are still more earners than parasites (more to the point they can be organized much more easily for political effect), and they are going to make their influence felt to an increasing degree, wherever democratic systems are emplaced. The recent govermental shifts in Canada and England are a case in point.
4. Probably true, again for sure in the short run. In the long run, I think we are heading for a more stratified and rigid society in terms of economic developments, simply because the 'expanding pie/expanding slice' strategy is no longer operative. And historical evidence seems quite clear on this point. Both individual and social unrest are maximized in those periods where beneficial change is estimated as most probable, slackening as conditions grow worse. For the poor, the world over, the prospects for the rest of the century are grim indeed.
5. I'm not sure about this at all, even in as short a range as another decade. To a great degree U.S. impotence is self-imposed, and to the extent that this impotence is perceived by the average citizen as harmful to his interests, there may be a groundswell of political activity to relax or change current trends. Not is it a foregone conclusion that the U.S.S.R. will continue to play the role of 'world policeman'. Their record so far has been one of as many defeats as victory: to the extent that a greater global hegemony does not translate into more immediate Soviet interest, expending scarce resources to this end (and even the U.S.S.R. is faced with resource problems) will become less and less attractive. The U.S.S.R. has embarked on a truly remarkable peacetime arms production effort: one that will, inevitably lead to block obsolescent in the two decades to come. More important, the re-emergence of China as a global force simply means that the U.S.S.R. replacing U.S.A. as global policeman scenario is too simplistic: we are heading into a world of more destabilized international relations simply because there are going to be a multiplicity of power centers.
6. The real 'sleeper' issue. Here you are dead right. Both Jean Raspail's *The Camp of the Saints* and Christopher Priest's *Fugue for a Darkening Island* have been given terrifying confirmatory power by the 'boat people' situation. Yet serious as this issue is, I am not convinced that some more positive resolution is possible [the court decisions which have given illegal aliens the same civil rights as citizens seem simply incredible to me, yet there it is], is people become concerned enough by it.

There are other futures predictions which can be made more firmly than any of the above. One is the standard deomgraphy: we are going to be living in a society which will be increasing in average age as the 'baby boom bulge' grows older and older. The full consequences of this have not been explored, I think. And perhaps the most serious philosophical problem facing us is the decline of authority just at the time when some tough measures have to be taken. The only people who have coped adequately with thinking about the ultimate meaning of the energy crisis are the 'lifeboat theorists'. I think that they are right, which means some hard choices are facing us indeed. The real problem is whether we will make these choices, or have solutions imposed on us because we failed to act.

I wonder if the combination of SF and gaming doesn't give you a viewpoint so malleable that you are never ready to accept the Arabic fatalism inherent in the phrase "it is written".

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SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF EDITOR, PUBLISHER, BUSINESS MANAGER, OR OWNER
Howard Thompson

I had intended to write and complementing you for the games MELEE and WIZARD, but when I read the ridiculous letter in issue no. 24 by Frank B. Weir, Jr., I decided to write a rebuttal. The WIZARD -- MELEE combat system is the best I've seen, simple though it may be. It is logical, unencumbered by myriad tables and charts, fast paced, and above all, FUN.

I write this as a former D&D devotee. Being naturally inclined to seek the logical, I found the D&D combat system to be limited, undetailed, mired in charts, and unnecessarily complicated. It has the virtue of a wide selection of weapons, but the idea of DX, ST, CH, IN, WS, and CN adjustment charts plus idiotic detail tables put me off. I lived with it though, ignorant of the TFT combat system totally. The inadequate rationale for wizards was strange. Why should a wizard forget the spell once he has used it? I wondered. The answer: A spell has power that impresses itself in the mind when memorized, which drains when used. This was enough to somewhat satisfy me, as that rule was included simply to make a game more playable. The WIZARD contention of draining strength when a spell is used is much more logical. I am confident that TFT: ITL could wipe out D&D in one swipe if it gets enough publicity and distribution. I am now a total TFT fan, having dropped D&D with all its tables and ad hoc patches.

(By the way, your art is superb, although I wish that you would do more color outside of advertisements. Your color process, also, comes out beautifully. Your logo is great. And, to top it all off, I do enjoy fiction here and there.)

The concept of FRP is fantastic, but, realistically, D&D is the only game in the field. If TFT is distributed widely enough, it would fill the gap. D&D is outdated, and not well enough designed to satisfy discriminating people. This is a pivotal point in gaming. Once ITL is out, watch out!

Mits Hadeishi
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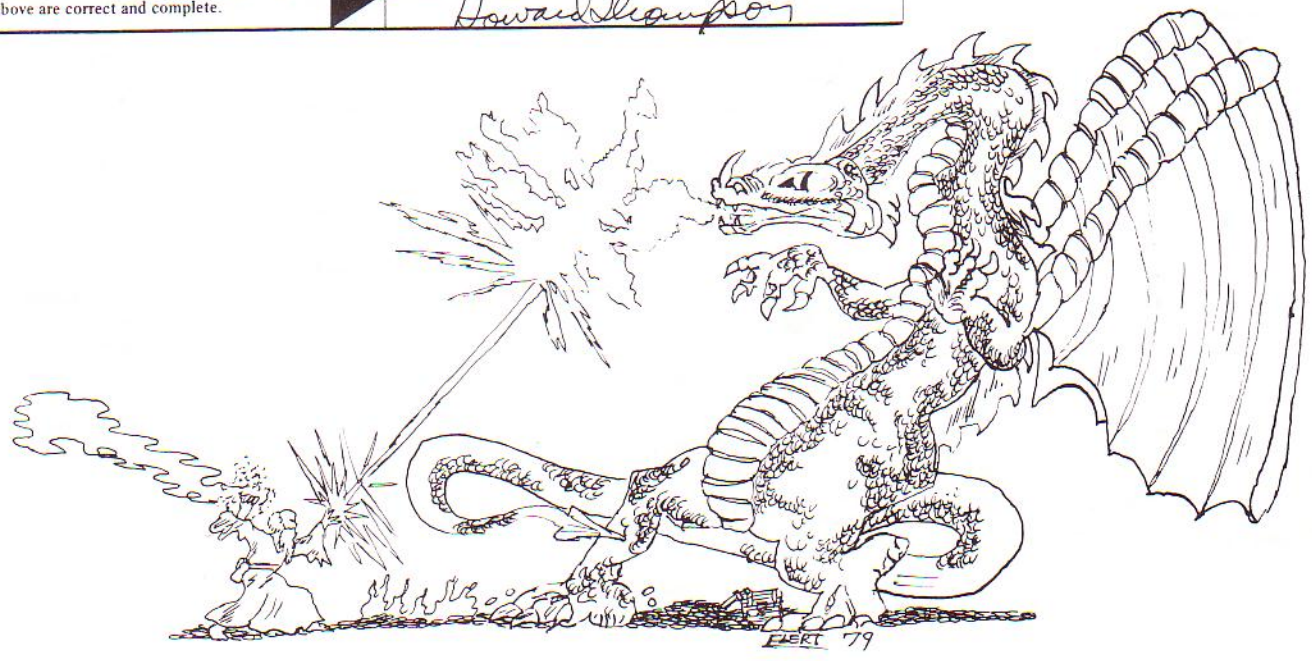


I have been a subscriber to your magazine for several years now, and I can honestly admit that I will continue subscribing as long as it lasts. I have also bought all of your products, and will continue this policy as long as you keep up your current high standards.

I just received a copy of the Dragon in the mail and after reading it from cover to cover can positively state that your magazine is by far the better one. Please keep up the good work.

I don't mean to imply that you are perfect, however. There are many things that you do that leave much to be desired. For example, the size of your magazine. It should be somewhat larger, (although not too large...) and contain more art and fiction. And not just 'cute' stories like Juggernaut One in issue 21. I mean some good, gaming related stories.

Another feature that I would like to see is a section on the various wargames on the market. A review section, which would contain short reviews written by the readers of your magazine, which summarize the game in a short paragraph and then either recommend it or advise against it. These reviews could be kept very short -- perhaps two paragraphs each. Many of my gaming friends and I would like to have the opinions of several other gamers on a game before we buy it.

Please keep your Where We're Going column. I feel that the honest and open discussion you have of your company is very interesting and informative. One of the strong points in your 'zine.

I really do like your 'new' slick look. It makes your 'zine much more attractive. The covers are so good looking it is often hard to avoid the temptation to tear it out and frame it. I would keep buying The Space Gamer if you changed to a cheaper format, but I wouldn't keep it on the coffee table anymore.

I'm really sorry about the 'Box Disaster'. I hope this won't hurt your company any; and that it will not discourage you from boxing future games. My gamer friends and I really would like to see your games in a boxed format.

The News & Plugs Column is most helpful. I enjoy this much better than looking through the entire magazine for an advertisement that struck my fancy.

Richard Lowe, Jr.
Lake Arrowhead, CA

Ronald Pehr's article on the DERYNI fell far short of the class, in both accuracy and understanding. Mr. Pehr felt that due to their 'inherent' training, DERYNI made superior Mages, when in fact, by DERYNI RISING, the first book in the series, the DERYNI were for the most part hiding the fact that they 'were' DERYNI. From this cloaking, they are no greater trained than regular Wizards, if anything, they are hampered by it, as was Kelson's Mother.

The lack of the –4 DX penalty for weapons is reasonable, but not the lack of penalty for armor. DERYNI should have armor DX adjustments, but as fighters, not wizards.

Furthermore, his recommendations that certain spells cost no ST loss is inaccurate. Again in DERYNI RISING, when Kelson fought The Shadowed One in Eldrich Combat, he lost Strength, and 'used' spells, such as DESTROY CREATION.

DERYNI in themselves are multipowerful, and in order to properly fit them into THE FANTASY TRIP, one must decide if they are a fighter with some spells, or a different class.

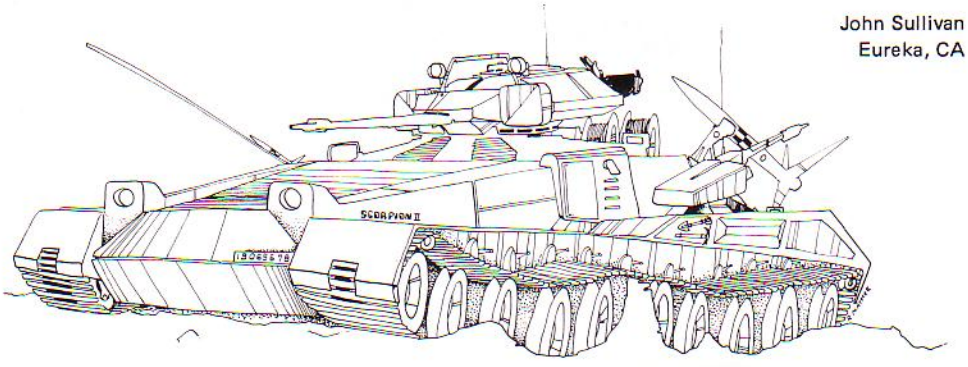
Mr. Pehr claims that their AID spell is permanent. Healing, is/was a lost art to the DERYNI, and is in itself more complex and powerful than AID. A solution is; HEAL, IQ 10, Cost: 2, plus 1 for every point healed, up to 5 points of Heal. In DERYNI RISING, Morgan healed Derry back from the point of death to the brink of consciousness, not the peak of health. For campaign purposes, HEAL should be limited to once per day per person.

Also, CIRCLE OF PROTECTION, does not take 4 DERYNI to make, but 2! But only 1 may proceed from it alive, as per DERYNI RISING, or one team, as in HIGH DERYNI, the third book in the series. Also NO weapons should be allowed, even staffs, this is a Duel Arcane.

Further spells may be added, such as WARDS MAJOR, IQ 16, cost: 10. A megahex field as before, but of unlimited duration. May only be used occassionally, such as once per week.

The ANY ILLUSION spell should be changed to 1 HEX ILLUSION. The problem with giving the DERYNI certain spell advantages, is --"Why run a Human or other race Wizard, when I can run a DERYNI, and be more powerful?!!. The answer is that to gain additional points, the DERYNI must gain 150 experience points, rather than the regular 100. I realize that this sets a different 'cost' presidence, but it will make the DERYNI better adaptable, for use in THE FANTASY TRIP.

John Sullivan
Eureka, CA



In TSG no. 24 there is a letter from Gregory Wong to the effect that there is a major flaw in GEV. Preposterous! The flaw, as he sees it, is that there are "perfect" solutions for the defender in three of the scenarios. Before presenting my opposing views, I would first like to ask Mr. Wong to read the rules again (particularly section 1.06). I have played GEV well over 100 times, and with the help of the random scenario games described in issue no. 19, have found it to be as challenging as ever. What it all amounts to is I feel the game isn't getting a fair shake.

There is nothing in the rules that states the defender is to pick four howitzers in the breakthrough scenario. As for the raid scenario, I'm not sure where Mr. Wong is collecting 152 points, but if it's in destroying the southern bridges and towns alone, he deserves to face seventeen turns of reinforcements. And what does he do if the defender starts blowing up his own bridges and towns to steal victory points from the attacker? There is a response to this eventuality, and it involves a thought-out attack on the defender's units as well as his territory. The train scenario is superior to the others in that it involves a well timed attack to get the train. And the attack must be concentrated. If a defender can split the attacking forces, he will stand a much better chance of survival. That goes for any of the scenarios. The attacker always starts with a superior force, and keeping it concentrated is a must. The nice thing about GEV's is that you can shift the "beehive" from one end of the board to the other in two turns.

As for terrain, I have often encountered situations where play is critical, and well it should be. The hexes he mentions as the only routes north are not the only ones, just the easiest ones. Remember what the German army did in the "impassible" Ardennes? Mr. Wong also overrates infantry. They're great in three squad units in the woods, but get a few D results against them, and they're reduced to a minor delaying force. And with GEV's second movement, once a hole appears in the line, it can often be exploited. I often "jump the swamp" up in the northeast corner of the board with perhaps one, and sometimes two, disables. The unnerving effect this can have on a defender counting on the swamp as a natural barrier can cause a fatal over reaction. On the Western side of the board, hex 0516 is often neglected by the defender. Five GEV's hopping this square, with a couple of disables, can wreak havoc the following turn.

The strong point of GEV is that it is a game high in tactical flavor and low in complexity. Some gruelling clashes can occur, with neither side fully knowing their victory status until the final tally. And if things seem to bog down, as they may have for Mr. Wong, bring on the ogres.

Roger Damon
Blairsville, PA

1979 GAME SURVEY

Greetings, and welcome to THE SPACE GAMER's third annual SF/Fantasy Game Survey. Once again, you get to cheer your favorites and shoot down the turkeys. Results will probably appear in TSG number 28.

Not all games published can be included in this survey; many marginally distributed or low-rated games have been omitted. The proliferation of role-playing game supplements forces us to include a representative few, rather than the whole batch.

Only one rating is requested for each game: an OVERALL evaluation. Ask yourself how happy you were with the WHOLE GAME – clarity, playability, design quality, graphics, components, and fun. If, on the whole, you'd buy it again, rate it accordingly.

Rate games on a scale of 1 to 9, with 1 being the LOWEST and 9 being the HIGHEST. In-between numbers would represent in-between feelings, with 5 being the rating for a game you neither liked nor disliked, but felt was only a fair, average effort.

We have also asked you to rate game companies, game magazines, and TYPES of games.

PLEASE rate ONLY those games which you have actually played, magazines which you have actually read, companies with which you have dealt, etc. Rating the ones you don't know about will only confuse the issue.

A new feature this year: If you have NEVER EVEN HEARD OF a game, do not give it a numerical rating – give it an "X". If you know of a game but have never played it, just leave the space blank. "X" represents a game, magazine, or company you never heard of at all!

Our thanks go to the publishers who responded to our pre-survey questionnaire, and to King's Hobbies, of Austin, for their help in filling in question-marks for those that didn't respond.

GAME TYPE RATINGS

---SFST - SF Space Tactical Games
---SFGT - SF Ground Tactical Games
---SFSS - SF Space Strategic Games
---SFGS - SF Ground Strategic Games
---SFC - SF Computer Games
---SFB - SF Board Games
---SFRP - SF Role-Playing Games
---SFRS - SF Role-Playing Supplements
---FT - Fantasy Tactical Games
---FB - Fantasy Board Games
---FRP - Fantasy Role-Playing Games
---FRS - Fantasy Role-Playing Supplements
---Historical Wargames
---Modern Period Wargames
---MicroGames and small games in general
---"Monster" games – extremely large games

COMPANIES

---AH - Avalon Hill
---AWG - American Wargames Group
---BTL - Battleline
---CIA - Conflict Interaction Associates
---CON - Conflict Games
---CSM - Chaosium
---CWW - Creative Wargames Workshop
---DIM - Dimension Six
---EON - Eon Products
---EX - Excalibur
---FBI - Flying Buffalo, Inc.
---FGU - Fantasy Games Unlimited
---GDW - Game Designers' Workshop
---GRM - Grimoire Games
---GTM - Gametime Games
---JG - Judges' Guild
---MET - Metagaming
---MSH - Mishler Company
---OSG - Operational Studies Group
---PHN - Phoenix Games
---SCH - Schubel & Son
---SPI - Simulations Publications, Inc.
---SS - Superior Simulations
---TFT - Task Force Games
---TSR - Tactical Studies Rules
---YAQ - Yaquinto
---ZOC - Zocchi & Associates

MAGAZINES

---Strategy & Tactics (SPI, $5)
---Moves (SPI, $2)
---The General (AH, $2)
---The Dragon (TSR, $2, sometimes $2.50)
---Wargamer's Digest ($2)
---Fire & Movement ($2)
---White Dwarf (British)
---The Space Gamer (MET, $1.50)
---Journal of the Travelers' Aid Society (GDW, $2)
---Sorceror's Apprentice (FBI, $2)
---Different Worlds (CSM, $2)
---Wargame Design (OSG, ?)
---American Wargamer (AWG, $2)
---Analog
---Omni
---Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine
---Starship
---Locus
---Galileo

Games to be rated are listed below by categories. After each game are noted its publisher (see the abbreviations above), physical component type, and price. Unknowns are represented by a question mark.

SF SPACE TACTICAL GAMES

---Alpha Omega (BTL, box, $13)
---Star Fighter (GTM, box, $10)
---WarpWar (MET, micro, $3)
---Alien Space (ZOC, bag, $5)
---Quazar (EX, box, $12)
---The Ythri (MET, bag, $8)
---Direct Conflict in Dimension Six (DIM, box, $10)
---Mayday (GDW, bag, $5)
---Black Hole (MET, micro, $3)
---Holy War (MET, micro, $3)
---Hot Spot (MET, micro, $3)
---Annihilator (MET, ½-micro, $3)
---Starfire (TFG, micro, $4)
---Star Fleet Battles (TFG, micro, $5)
---Asteroid Zero-Four (TFG, micro, $4)
---Star Quest (OSG, micro, $4)
---Nebula 19 (MSH, ?, ?)
---StarGate (SPI, micro, $4)
---Vector 3 (SPI, micro, $4)
---Titan Strike (SPI, micro, $4)

SF GROUND TACTICAL GAMES

---Star Soldier (SPI, box, $9)
---Starship Troopers (AH, box, $10)
---Atlantis 12,500 (EX, bag, $3.49)
---Ogre (MET, micro, $3)
---Chitin:I (MET, micro, $3)
---Rivets (MET, micro, $3)
---Olympica (MET, micro, $3)
---GEV (MET, micro, $4)
---Ice War (MET, micro, $3)
---Invasion of the Air Eaters (MET, micro, $3)
---Cerberus (TFG, micro, $4)
---Snapshot (GDW, box, $8)
---UFO (AH, box, $6)
---Colony Delta (FGU, box, $12)
---The Creature That Ate Sheboygan (SPI, micro, $4)

SF SPACE STRATEGIC GAMES

---Battlefleet Mars (SPI, box, $12)
---Starforce (SPI, box, $9)
---Second Empire (DIM, box, $14)
---Stellar Conquest (MET, box, $13)
---Star Probe (TSR, bag, $6)
---Star Empires (TSR, bag, $7.50)
---Godsfire (MET, box, $16)
---Outreach (SPI, box, 9)
---Imperium (GDW, box, $12)
---Belter (GDW, box, $12)
---Freedom in the Galaxy (SPI, box, $20)
---Starfall (YAQ, box, $13)
---Double Star (GDW, box, $10)

SF GROUND STRATEGIC GAMES

---Invasion: America (SPI, box, $12)
---Objective: Moscow (SPI, box, $12)
---After The Holocaust (SPI, box, $12)
---The Bloodtree Rebellion (GDW, box, $13)

SF COMPUTER GAMES

---StarWeb (FBI)
---Empyrean Challenge (SS)
---Pellic Quest (CIA)
---The Tribes of Crane (SCH)

SF BOARD GAMES

---Cosmic Encounter (EON, box, $10)
---Dune (AH, box, $15)
---Darkover (EON, box, ?)
---Strange New Worlds (GTM, box, $10)
---Second Empire (DIM, box, $14)
---Time War (YAQ, box, $13)

FANTASY TACTICAL GAMES

---The Fantasy Trip: Melee (MET, micro, $3)
---TFT: Wizard (MET, micro, $3)
---Citadel (FGU, bag, $4)
---War of Wizards (TSR, box, $10)
---Snit's Revenge (TSR, box, ?)
---Sticks & Stones (MET, micro, $3)
---OneWorld (MET, ½-micro, $3)
---Stomp (CSM, bag, $3.50)

FANTASY BOARD GAMES

---White Bear, Red Moon (CSM, bag, $10)
---Lankhmar (TSR, box, $10)
---Spellmaker (GTM, box, $10)
---Nomad Gods (CSM, bag, $10)
---Warlocks & Warriors (TSR, box, $7)
---Dungeon! (TSR, box, $10)
---Swords & Sorcery (SPI, box, $13)
---Quest (GTM, box, $10)
---Sorceror (SPI, box, $9)
---Battle of Five Armies (TSR, bag, $5)
---Elric (CSM, bag, $12.50)
---The Ring Trilogy (SPI, box, $20)
---Lords & Wizards (FGU, booklet, $12)
---Magic Realm (AH, box, $15)
---Wizard's Quest (AH, box, $12)
---Enchanted Land (AWG, box, $12)
---Lords of the Middle Sea (CSM, box, $10)
---Cyborg (EX, bag, $9)
---Divine Right (TSR, box, $10)
---The Dragonlords (FGU, bag, $11)
---Beast Lord (YAQ, box, $15)

SF ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

---Starfaring (FBI, booklet, $6)
---Traveller (GDW, box, $12)
---Gamma World (TSR, box, $10)
---Flash Gordon (FGU, booklet, $6)
---Starships & Spacemen (FGU, booklet, $7)
---Metamorphosis Alpha (TSR, booklet, $5)
---Superhero 44 (ZOC, bag, $7)
---John Carter of Mars (SPI, box, $20)

SF ROLE-PLAYING SUPPLEMENTS

---1001 Characters (GDW, booklet, $4)
---Animal Encounters (GDW, booklet, $4)
---The Spinward Marches (GDW, booklet, $4)
---Citizens (GDW, booklet, $4)
---Mercenary (GDW, booklet, $6)
---High Guard (GDW, booklet, $6)
---The Kinunir (GDW, booklet, $5)
---Spacefarer's Guide to Planets, Sector 1 (PHN, book, $8)
---Spacefarer's Guide to Planets, Sector 2 (PHN, book, $8)
---Spacefarer's Guide to Alien Monsters (PHN, book, $8)
---Sparefarer's Guide to Alien Races (PHN, book, $8)

FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

---Tunnels & Trolls (FBI, book, $8)
---Chivalry & Sorcery (FGU, book, $10)
---Dungeons & Dragons-old (TSR, box, $15)
---D&D - advanced (TSR, box, $10)
---Empire of the Petal Throne (TSR, box, $27.50)
---Runequest (CSM, bag, $12)
---Bunnies & Burrows (FGU, booklet, $6)

FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING GAME SUPPLEMENTS

---Death Test (MET, micro, $3)
---D&D Monster Manual (TSR, book, $10)
---Cults of Prax (CSM, book, $12)
---Balastor's Barracks (CSM, book, $3)
---Apple Lane (CSM, booklet, $4)
---Snake Pipe Hollow (CSM, booklet, $5)
---Trolls & Trollkin (CSM, booklet, $2)
---Scorpion Men & Broos (CSM, booklet, $2)
---All the World's Monsters I (CSM, book, $9)
---All the World's Monsters II (CSM, book, $9)
---C&S Sourcebook (FGU, book, $8)
---Swords & Sorcerors (FGU, book, $8)
---Saurians (FGU, book, $12.50)
---The Lost Abbey of Calthonwey (PHN, booklet, $5)
---The Mines of Keridav (PHN, booklet, $5)
---In Search of the Unknown (TSR, booklet, $5.49)
---Arduin Grimoire (GRM, book, $9)
---Welcome to Skull Tower (GRM, book, $9)
---The Runes of Doom (GRM, book, $9)
---Buffalo Castle (FBI, booklet, $3)
---Deathtrap Equalizer Dungeon (FBI, booklet, $3)
---City of Terrors (FBI, booklet, $7)
---Sorceror's Solitaire (FBI, booklet, $3)
---Descent into the Depths of the Earth (TSR, bag, $5)
---Steading of the Hill Giant Chief (TSR, bag, $4.50)
---City-Stage of the Invincible Overlord (Judges' Guild, book, $8)

YOUR COMMENTS ON TSG

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---Game reviews in general
---Complete games in some issues
---Complete game adventures/scenarios (i.e., MicroQuests)
---Game variant articles
---Game-related fiction
---Science fiction
---Heroic-fantasy fiction
---Strategy hints for specific games
---Designers' articles on their new games
---Artwork
---Color artwork
---Articles on how to design games
---Historical fact articles on specific battles
---Historical fact articles specifically related to FRP gaming (i.e., medieval weaponry)
---Science fact articles in general
---Science fact articles specifically related to SF gaming (i.e., spaceship design)
---Advertising
---News about gaming companies
---News about Metagaming in particular
---News about tournaments, etc.
---Reviews of new miniature figures
---Contests
---Humorous articles
---Cartoons
---Continuing comic strips
---Accounts of actual game sessions
---Interviews with designers and publishers
---Articles on computer gaming
---Computer programs for games
---"News & Plugs"
---Eldon Tannish
---Editorials
---Letters to the Editor
---Annual Game Survey
---SF movie reviews
---Fantasy movie reviews
---SF book reviews
---Fantasy book reviews
---Military history book reviews
---Articles on wargames OTHER than fantasy and science fiction
---Articles on board games (i.e., Stratego, Risk, Diplomacy)
---Articles on miniature construction and painting
---Articles on miniatures gaming
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---Science fiction games
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---Miniature dioramas
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---Strategy and Tactics
---Moves
---The General
---The Dragon
---Wargamer's Digest
---Fire & Movement
---White Dwarf
---Journal of the Traveler's Aid Society
---Sorceror's Apprentice
---Different Worlds
---Wargame Design
---American Wargamer
---The Space Gamer
---Analog
---Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine
---Omni
---Galileo
---Locus
---Creative Computing
---Starlog
---Starship
---Astronomy

What is your favorite magazine NOT listed?

If you were to be marooned on a desert island with only one game (and enough people to play it) . . . what would that game be

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If you have any comments, here's your chance:

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